

Name: _____ ()

Date: _____ Sec _____

Situational Writing – Formal letter writing

Question:



You should look at the information in the advertisement printed on page 2, study the information carefully and plan your answer before beginning to write.

Your school has always encouraged the students to participate in self-initiated Values in Action (VIA) projects. The school believes that such projects help students show care and develop a strong sense of empathy towards the larger society locally. Your class has seen an advertisement by a local volunteer organisation, TheKINDLocal, Singapore, and is keen to offer its help.

Write a letter to the Project Manager, stating clearly:

- which of the three projects your class would like to embark on
- when and how many days of help your class is able to offer
- how your class plans to organise and carry out the service project
- how participating in this project will benefit both your class and the community
- one follow up activity that your class will carry out in school to encourage more students to offer their time and services to society at large

Write your letter in clear, accurate English and in a persuasive tone, to convince the Project Manager that the service offered is **beneficial** and should be considered for implementation. You should use your own words as much as possible.

Purpose (P)	
Audience (A)	
Context (C)	
Format (F)	

TheKINDLocal

Singapore

Volunteer in Singapore and make a difference

How many of us have volunteered in schools just to fulfil the minimum VIA requirements? Being pragmatic Singaporeans, we think that volunteering involves losing time and money, or that our schedules are too tight. But what about the intangible benefits? Here's the catch: happy people give and gain more with volunteer work!

Think about taking part in any of our volunteer projects. Whatever it is you would like to do, we are happy to have you come on board and are willing to hear your suggestions.

Volunteer Projects

Animal Care

If you love furry creatures, volunteering at animal shelters is just for you. At Animal Lovers League Shelter, you can help take care of the animals, clean their environment as well as organise fundraising activities.

Teaching

Faith Institution caters to children aged 5-10 years old who are diagnosed with mild intellectual disabilities. Accompany the children on excursions, help out with co-curricular activities or initiate your own service learning project!

Elder Care

At Hope Community Services Centre, which looks after the elderly residents who live in the HDB blocks in the Riverview estate, you can provide handyman and cleaning services which the elderly residents need, or simply offer your company and organise activities for them.



SMSS 2017 4E5N PRELIM PAPER

Structure	Report
	Yew Zi Sheng Student Representative, 4S3 St Andrew's Secondary School 15 Francis Thomas Drive Singapore 359342 14 April 2020 Project Manager TheKINDLocal 1 Jalan Rajah Singapore 870851 Dear Sir/Madam, <u>Providing student volunteers to help out in society</u>
Paragraph 1-Introduction - states recommended choice - Use of modal to convey polite tone (would like to..) - Use of complex sentence structure	Having reviewed and deliberated on the three projects, my classmates and I would like to volunteer for the Elderly Care project and help out by interacting with the elderly and providing gifts and games to keep them entertained. We are able to render help for three half days.
Paragraph 2- Body - Elaborates (using PEEL) - Use of complex punctuation – a dash - Elaborates on when and how you intend to organize to carry out the project.	Almost all of the volunteers have spent time with their grandparents and they have a heart for the elderly who live alone - many are also unable to clean their houses independently. Our class has planned to split up into groups of three, which gives us enough people to clean up the houses of the elderly. No doubt that the elderly would be enjoying living a more hygiene living environment, our class has also decided that it would be more meaningful if we stayed behind for a while to socialise with them. We would play games such as bingo and connect four, and provide entertainment like singing Chinese songs and taking them out for walks around the neighbourhood park. Thus, we feel that this would bring joy to their world as many of them live in solitude. Many of them hardly have any visitors to care for them.
Paragraph 3- Body Elaborates about the <u>benefit</u> to students	We can learn social and communication skills as we interact and socialise with the elderly. By befriending them, we can learn many things about them such as how they overcome adversity and their contributions to building a prosperous Singapore as our Pioneer Generation. Thus, these values that we emulate from them will help steer us to find our path of success especially to be resilient in overcoming the challenges to prepare for the upcoming national examination. .
Paragraph 4- Body Elaborates about encouraging more students to participate	Publicity is pivotal to encourage more students to volunteer. What our class plans to do even after the three days is to paste posters all around the school so that the students seeing them can get inspired or they would be curious to find out more. We would also harness social media such as producing Tiktok videos to create awareness and make volunteering a fun and exciting activity!
Paragraph 5- Conclusion Restates the recommended choice Letter signed off with a legible signature	In conclusion, I sincerely you would consider our class VIA activities as many of us look forward to bringing a smile to the faces of the elderly. Yours faithfully, SIGNATURE Nicholas and Zi Sheng 4S3 Class Chairmen St Andrew's Secondary School

1. Using the Visual Text

You will be assessed on your ability to use the given visual text, judge what is relevant and include the necessary information in the writing. You will need to organise the information in the writing. You will need to organise the information in a logical and appropriate manner to produce a coherent piece of writing. You have to use your own words as far as possible instead of reproducing verbatim the information given in the visual text.

Generally there are two basic ways to paraphrase and use the visual text: ***vocabulary level*** and ***sentence structure level***.

Vocabulary/phrasal level

Original from VT: Only routine help is needed, for example, helping children with art and craft activities.

Paraphrase: Only ordinary tasks are necessary, for example, assisting children during art sessions.

Sentence structure level

Original from VT: We learn to connect with others and in so doing, we learn a little about ourselves.

Paraphrase: We discover a little about ourselves when we interact with other people.

2. Paraphrasing Techniques

To paraphrase effectively, you might need a combination of the techniques. It is important that in paraphrasing, you do not change the **original meaning of the sentence/text, suitability of the word as well as the Purpose, Audience and context of writing**. (The tone and mood of writing must be considered.) Sometimes, direct copying is unavoidable. So do not be obsessed with paraphrasing every word.

- **Use synonyms**

Original: Break tasks down into manageable units.

Paraphrase: Divide assignments into smaller parts.

- **Replace a phrase with a word (or a word with a phrase)**

Original: **Many times** we let stress **take over** our lives.

Paraphrase: Often, we let stress rule our lives.

- **Change a word from one part of the speech to another**

Original: Practise visualisation of your goals.

Paraphrase: Visualise your goals. (*Use of imperative for effective sentence construction*)

- **Change the sentence structure (E.g from active to passive voice using different connectors)**

Original: Studies have shown that learning and performance are affected by sleep deprivation, so ensure that you are well rested before you tackle the next day's task.

Paraphrase: Make sure that you rest well before tackling tomorrow's tasks **as** studies have proven that sleep deprivation affects learning and performance. (*Using Cause and Effect to construct an explanation*)

- **Use examples to frame the ideas**

Original: Take a break from technology: Stay away from your laptop, mobile phone and iPad. (Remember the punctuation mark : is used for listing)

Paraphrase: When you are studying, turn off your mobile phone and refrain from using the internet even during study breaks.

- **Summarise key ideas**

Original: Set your priorities. Do the most important thing first.

Paraphrase: Prioritise your tasks.

- **Change figurative language to literal language**

Original: Don't take on more than you can handle. (literal)

Paraphrase: Don't bite off more than you can chew. (figurative)

3. Achieving Sentence Variety

To maintain your reader's interest, try to use a variety of sentence structure in writing.

- **Began with an adverb**

1. **Stealthily**, the cat moved towards the mouse. (adverb of manner)
2. **Gingerly**, the civil defence officer approached the ticking bag.

- **Began with an adverbial clause**

1. Compared to their peers in less developed countries, students in Singapore are privileged.
2. Although she was angered by his hurtful remarks, she spoke to him politely.
3. Whenever I smell the aroma of freshly baked pastries, I am reminded of my Home Economics class.
4. Under no circumstances will we allow alcohol and non-invited guests into the school premises on graduation night, so I will ask Mr Koh..... (Do not write: Under no circumstances **we will allow...**)
5. Only after we had gathered students' feedback and written a firm plan did we make the proposal to the principal.

- **Being with a present participle clause**

1. Vacillating between studying drama and psychology, she finally opted for the latter.
2. Guiding the other members through the challenge, the orientation group learnt the importance of survival skills.

- **Began with a gerund**

1. Sewing not only brings her joy but it also brings in extra income.
2. Learning is better done when students have had ample rest.
3. Laughing is good for health.

- **Began with an infinitive clause**

1. To improve her grades, she adopted good study habits.
2. To advance in the singing competition, he was receptive to constructive criticism.
3. To succeed in life, you must not be afraid to make mistakes.

- **Say it differently: Imagine...**

By beginning a sentence with imagine, we can sometimes add a sense of wonder or an element of drama to the idea carried in the sentence.

Instead of writing: We will have fun.

We can write: Imagine the fun we will have. / Imagine what fun we will have.

Instead of writing: We were elated when we heard the good news.

We can write: Imagine how elated we were when we heard the good news. /Imagine the elation we felt when we heard the good news.

Note that in formal writing, we use predominantly complex sentence structure (e.g with subordinating clause) avoid contracted forms; use formal vocabulary.

Example:

This simple activity will instil in everyone the awareness that going green is not a herculean task. We believe everyone will be encouraged to continue doing his part in going green. Moreover, I am sure this activity will get people to think twice before throwing things away and to be less wasteful. I am confident if the event is organised well, Earth Day this year will prove to be an educational and fun-filled affair where everyone can go away with a heightened awareness of and an increased sense of responsibility for the state of Mother Earth.

4. Common errors – formal vs informal language

- **Avoid contractions**

Instead of writing:

I've canvassed the students' and teachers' opinions on the proposed new club, and after evaluating their feedbacks concerning the three potentially viable clubs, I believe that we should establish a current affairs club.

The writer of the formal letter states:

I **have canvassed** the students' and teachers' opinions on the proposed new club, and after evaluating their feedbacks concerning the three potentially viable clubs, I believe that we should establish a current affairs club.

- **Avoid shortened forms**

Instead of writing:

A book club is unlikely to attract a wide membership as it probably will appeal to only the arts or lit students. (**The use of conjunction as is to signal to marker the reason/justification**)

The writer of the formal letter states:

A book club is unlikely to attract a wide membership as it probably will appeal to only the arts or **literature** students. (**The use of conjunction as is to signal to marker the reason/justification**)

- **Use appropriate phrases or words**

Instead of writing:

I **really** feel that we should **push the students and make them keep** up with current things **so that they will not be obsolete in this world**. (**The use of really and push makes the sentence informal and the idea is vague and is too personal for a formal writing.**)

The writer of the formal letter states:

I **strongly** feel that we **should encourage the students** to keep up with current **events and stay relevant in the world**.

- **Avoid casual or colloquial words or expressions**

In formal Standard English, avoid conversational expressions such as What's more, and a lot of, or lots of, and use many, numerous or much instead.

Instead of writing:

A book club is unlikely to attract a wide membership as it probably will appeal to only the arts and literature students. **What's more**, most students prefer to read books at their leisure.

The writer of the formal letter states:

A book club is unlikely to attract a wide membership as it probably will appeal to only the arts and literature students. **Futhermore/Moreover**, most students prefer to read books at their leisure.