

Warm up

Ask students to give you any ideas they have about what makes a sentence. A good idea is to make a mind map of their ideas on the board. You may need to guide them towards focusing on word order (syntax), punctuation, and the language used in sentences specifically written for an essay or report (they need to use a formal tone).

Practice

1 Complete the sentences by putting the words in the right order. Add capital letters if necessary.

- Remind students that word order is very important in English sentences. Elicit the SVO rule (subject, verb, object) and discuss where extra information can be added in a sentence. Use sentence **e** to remind them a sentence begins with a capital letter.

Answers

- a** explain what the campus offers
- b** the Thames is a lot shorter
- c** fish and chips is a favourite English dish
- d** Athens is a large city
- e** The architect Hadid built the Maxxi Museum

2 Finish the sentences with a full stop, an exclamation mark or a question mark. Check if your partner has the same answers.

Suggested answers

- a** exclamation mark
Accept the suggestion of a full stop if you feel the answer is justified. Students will probably feel this has not been taken from a report/essay because it is anecdotal in tone and – especially with an exclamation mark – much too informal.
- b** question mark
This sentence is formal enough to be included in a report/essay.
- c** full stop
This sentence is formal enough to be included in a report/essay.
- d** question mark
This sentence is formal enough to be included in a report/essay.
- e** exclamation mark
This sentence is clearly not taken from an essay/report, as it could only be used in spoken English. (Though it could be written down as reported speech.)

3 Match the more formal verbs in the box to the phrasal verbs.

- You may want to discuss other phrasal verbs students know and see if they can think of more formal ways of expressing the same ideas. Remind them that they should try to use the more formal equivalents in academic writing where possible. You could ask them to think of examples of each formal phrase in use.

Answers


- a** discover
- b** return
- c** delay
- d** postpone
- e** reject
- f** discuss

4 Match the more formal phrases in the box to the informal phrases.

- Again, you may want to discuss other examples of informal language students know and see if they can think of more formal ways of expressing the same ideas.

Answers

- a** a large number of
- b** receive
- c** has the ability to
- d** consider
- e** children
- f** purchase

5  In pairs or groups, write a sentence that you could imagine including in an essay about how a city has changed from 20 years ago.

- When students are ready, you could have them write their sentences on the board and ask for others' opinions.