

Formal and Informal Language

What is formal and informal register and when do we use it?

How do contractions and question tags effect the register of our language?



Class discussion

Audience and Context

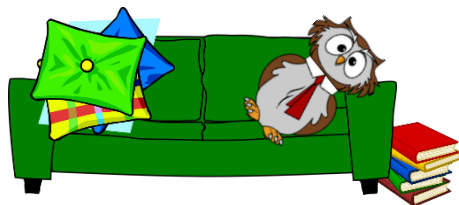
The **register** depends on *situation* and *audience*.

The same person will use *different registers* in *different contexts*.

At **home** with
family

*You're going to
wear that, are
you?*

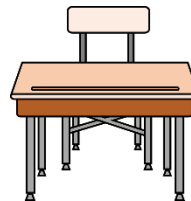
Informal



In **school** with
head teacher

*When will we be
allowed our
brooms back?*

More Formal



In the **Ministry**
with the **Minister**

*I wonder, might I
be permitted to
attend?*

Very Formal



Class discussion

Register

Formal language is often used for:

Situation	Audience
Official or formal situations	People you don't know
Generalised or impersonal writing	People in official/important roles
Written communication more than spoken	People as a group

We would like to request your presence at next week's sorting ceremony.



The gillyweed was placed in a cauldron and heated over the course of one hour.

Please alight at the Leaky Cauldron.

Class discussion

Register

Informal language is often used for:

Situation	Audience
Everyday conversation	Family, friends and people you know well
Social media and texts	People similar to you
Most spoken communication	People you meet in day-to-day life



I'm doing breakfast. You like jam on your toast, don't you?

Hi. Two chips, a burger and a hotdog. No sauce, thanks.

We're having butterbeers. Want one?

I'd

what's

mustn't

Contractions

we're

you're

haven't

Contractions appear in informal language.

Spoken language often contains **contractions**...
but written **formal language** uses the longer versions of the word/s.

We might *write*:

*It is a shame that I **cannot** go to
Hogsmeade.*

but we are more likely to *say*:

*It's a shame I **can't** go to
Hogsmeade.*

*What are the **formal** versions of the **contractions** above?*

Question Tags can be used in **informal language**.

Tags are questions added to a clause to encourage a listener to respond.

main clause Tag

She can fly , can't she?

main clause Tag

He is from Slytherin , isn't he?

The **tag**
changes a
statement into
a **question**.



Tags can be used to soften a **command**.

main clause Tag

Pass me a quill, will you?

In very **informal speech** *right* and *yeah* can be used as **tags**.

main clause Tag

You're ready, yeah?

BLACK STILL AT LARGE

Sirius Black, possibly the most infamous prisoner ever to be held in Azkaban fortress, is still eluding capture, the Ministry of Magic confirmed today. "We are doing all we can to recapture Black," said the Minister for Magic, Cornelius Fudge, this morning, "and we ask that the magical community remain calm." Fudge has been criticised by some members of the International Confederation of Wizards for informing the Muggle Prime Minister of the crisis.

Daily Prophet



An' now he's out. Never been a breakout from Azkaban before, has there Ern? Beats me how he did it. Frightening, eh?

Stan Shunpike

Can you see the difference between formal and informal language in these two texts?

Watch the Knight Bus scene from Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban to hear lots of informal language!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3VkPwDmdwY>



To explore formal and informal language.

Think about the audience – WHO are you talking to?

Is it written or spoken language?

What features do we use in formal writing?

What features do we use in informal writing?

Slang

Contractions/question tags

official sounding

no contractions

To explore formal and informal language.

Independent Practice:

Complete sheet A – *Tick the most formal sentence in each group.*

Once finished, complete sheet B - *Rewrite some of Stan Shunpike's dialogue in **formal language**. Think about sentence structure, grammar rules and vocabulary choice.*

Example:

Take 'er away, Ern.

would become ... →

Please can you drive forwards,
thank you Ern.

Challenge: Create a poster to explain all the features you can think of for formal writing and informal writing.