

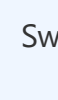
# Day 5: Introduction to Persuasive Email Writing

NSW Selective Test Writing Preparation

## Learning Objectives



Master email structure: subject line, greeting, body, conclusion, sign-off



Switch between formal and informal tones appropriately



Apply concise persuasive writing techniques



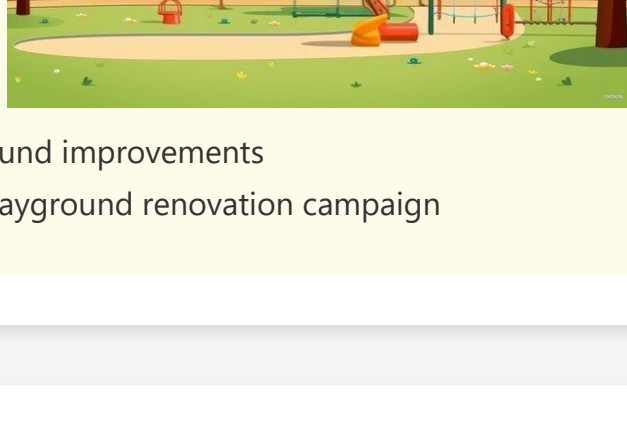
Develop clarity, brevity, and persuasive language skills

## Today's Scenario

### The Neglected Playground

Your school's playground has fallen into a state of disrepair. The once vibrant play area is now characterized by:

- Rusty, damaged equipment that poses safety hazards
- Cracked concrete surfaces with puddles forming after rain
- Faded line markings for sports and games
- Limited shade during hot summer days
- Inadequate seating areas for students



You will need to write two emails:

- Formal Email:** To the school principal advocating for playground improvements
- Informal Email:** To fellow students to gather support for a playground renovation campaign

## Email Structure

Component	Purpose	Tips
<b>Subject Line</b>	Captures attention and summarizes content	Keep it concise (5-8 words), specific, and compelling
<b>Greeting</b>	Establishes tone and relationship	Formal: "Dear [Title + Last Name]," Informal: "Hi [First Name],"
<b>Introduction</b>	States purpose clearly and hooks reader	1-2 sentences that get straight to the point
<b>Body</b>	Presents arguments and evidence	Keep paragraphs short (2-3 sentences) Use bullet points for clarity
<b>Conclusion</b>	Summarizes and calls for action	Clear request with specific next steps
<b>Sign-off</b>	Closes professionally and identifies sender	Formal: "Yours sincerely/faithfully," Informal: "Thanks," "Best,"

## Formal vs. Informal Tone

### Formal Tone

- Use complete sentences and proper grammar
- Avoid contractions (use "cannot" not "can't")
- Use more sophisticated vocabulary
- Address recipient by title (Mr./Ms./Dr.)
- Maintain professional distance
- Include proper salutations and closings
- Avoid slang, idioms, and emoticons

Use when: Writing to authorities, officials, teachers, or in professional contexts

### Informal Tone

- Can use contractions (can't, don't, we're)
- May use more conversational language
- Address recipient by first name
- Can show more personality and emotion
- May use some colloquialisms
- Simpler vocabulary is acceptable
- Can be more direct and casual

Use when: Writing to friends, classmates, or in casual contexts

### Important Note on Register Shifting

Register shifting is the ability to adjust your language formality based on your audience. This is a crucial skill for the NSW Selective Test, as questions may ask you to write for different audiences.

## Concise Persuasive Writing Techniques for Emails

### 1. Strong Subject Lines

Capture attention immediately with compelling, specific subject lines.

**Weak:** "Playground Issue"

**Strong:** "Urgent: Unsafe Playground Conditions Require Immediate Action"

### 2. Fact-Evidence-Impact Structure

Present a fact, provide evidence, then explain the impact.

**Example:** "The playground equipment is dangerous (fact). Three students were injured last month (evidence). This poses ongoing safety risks to all students (impact)."

### 3. Strategic Emotive Language

Use carefully chosen emotional words to create impact without overwriting.

**Example:** "Distressed students **yearn** for a safe place to play."

### 4. Precise Descriptive Language

Use vivid descriptions that help readers visualize the issue.

**Example:** "The jagged metal edges of the slide **glint menacingly** in the sun."

### 5. Bullet Points and Lists

Break down complex arguments into scannable points.

**Example:**

Our playground needs improvements because it:

- Poses significant safety hazards
- Limits physical activity options
- Detracts from school pride

### 6. Clear Call to Action

State exactly what you want the recipient to do.

**Example:** "Please schedule a meeting with the student council by Friday to discuss renovation options and budget allocation."

## Exemplar: Formal Persuasive Email

**Subject:** Urgent Safety Concerns: School Playground Renovation Request

**To:** principal@schoolname.edu

Dear Principal Henderson,

I am writing to express my **profound concern** regarding the **deteriorating** condition of our school playground and to respectfully request immediate renovations to address serious safety issues affecting student wellbeing.

Our once vibrant playground has transformed into a **hazardous landscape** of jagged metal protrusions and crumbling concrete surfaces. The swing set chains have rusted to the point where they **scream painfully** with each movement, while the **splintered wooden benches** have become unusable. During yesterday's brief rainfall, I observed **ankle-deep puddles forming** across the basketball court, rendering it unusable for days afterward.

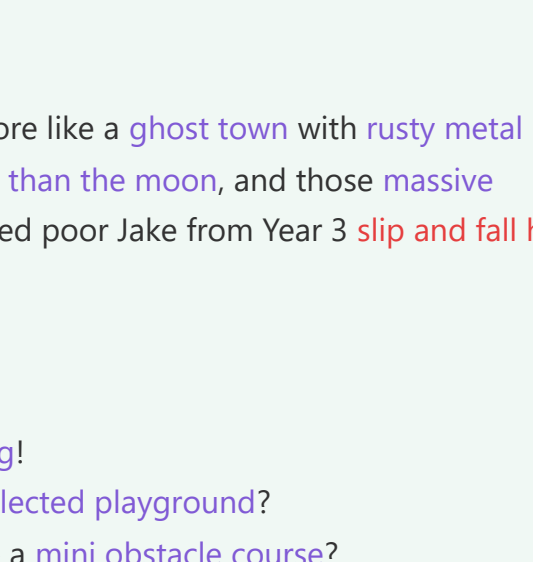
This situation presents three critical concerns:

- Student Safety:** Last week alone, two Year 4 students sustained minor injuries from the **protruding metal edges** of the damaged slide. The **uneven concrete** has caused multiple tripping incidents.
- Mental Wellbeing:** Students now view break times with **anxiety** rather than anticipation. The playground should be a place of joy and development, not **fear** and avoidance.
- Educational Impact:** Physical activity is crucial for cognitive development. The **uninviting, barren play space** discourages movement, potentially affecting classroom focus and academic performance.

Research by the Australian Institute of Sport indicates that schools with well-maintained play facilities see **28% higher** rates of physical activity among students and report **fewer behavioral issues** in the classroom. Our school deserves nothing less than a safe, engaging environment that supports both physical and intellectual development.

I respectfully propose:

- An immediate safety assessment of all playground equipment
- Repairs to the most hazardous areas within the next two weeks
- Development of a comprehensive renovation plan by term's end
- A meeting with student representatives to gather input on improvements



I understand that budget constraints are a reality; however, the **potential cost of student injury** – both human and financial – far outweighs the investment needed for these improvements. Our P&C has already expressed willingness to assist with fundraising initiatives.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

Year [X] Student Representative

[Your Email Address]

### Analysis of Formal Email Techniques

- Emotive Language:** "profound concern," "fear," "anxiety" - conveys urgency without being melodramatic

- Descriptive Language:** "jagged metal protrusions," "ankle-deep puddles," "splintered wooden benches" - creates vivid imagery

- Evidence:** Specific examples of injuries, research data from credible source

- Structure:** Clear introduction, problem description, impact analysis, solution proposal, conclusion

- Tone:** Respectful but firm, professional, well-reasoned

- Call to Action:** Specific requests with timeline suggestions

## Exemplar: Informal Persuasive Email

**Subject:** 🚨 Our Playground is Falling Apart - Let's Fix It Together! 🚨

**To:** studentcouncil@schoolname.edu

Hey everyone!

Have you seen the **sorry state** of our playground lately? It's gone from awesome to **awful**, and I think it's time we did something about it!

Remember when the playground used to be the **highlight** of our day? Now it's more like a **ghost town** with **rusty metal skeletons** where fun equipment used to be. The basketball court has more **craters than the moon**, and those **massive puddles** that stick around for days after rain are basically **small lakes** now! I watched poor Jake from Year 3 **slip and fall hard** yesterday when he tried to play four-square on the **slick, uneven surface**.

This isn't just about having fun (though that matters too!). It's about:

- Staying **safe** - those **metal edges** on the slide are **sharp enough to tear clothing!**
- Having **pride** in our school - what do visitors think when they see our **sad, neglected playground?**
- Getting exercise - who wants to run around on **cracked concrete** that feels like a **mini obstacle course?**

Here's where you come in! I'm putting together a group to approach Principal Henderson about fixing our playground. We need:

- Photos of the worst areas (got a smartphone? snap some pics!)
- Stories about near-misses or accidents you've seen
- Ideas for what a **dream playground** would include
- Volunteers to help with a petition and maybe some fundraising

Can you imagine having a playground with **smooth surfaces** for ball games, **sturdy equipment** that doesn't wobble scarily when you use it, and maybe even some **shaded areas** so we don't all **bake like cookies** in summer?

If you're in, reply to this email by Friday. We're meeting in Room 12 at lunch next Monday to get organized. Let's make this happen!

Thanks heaps,

[Your Name]

The kid who's tired of tetanus-risk tetherball 😊

### Analysis of Informal Email Techniques

- Emotive Language:** "sorry state," "awful," "highlight" - conversational but impactful

- Descriptive Language:** "ghost town," "rusty metal skeletons," "craters than the moon" - vivid imagery with some humor

- Relatable Examples:** Specific incident with "Jake from Year 3" creates immediacy

- Tone:** Energetic, conversational, uses contractions and casual phrases

- Call to Action:** Clear, specific requests with exact meeting details

- Format:** Short paragraphs, lists, emoji use (appropriate for informal communication)

## Writing Skill Focus: Clarity & Brevity

### Clarity Techniques

- One idea per paragraph** - Keep paragraphs focused on a single point
- Topic sentences** - Begin paragraphs with a clear statement of the main idea
- Simple sentence structure** - Avoid overly complex sentences with multiple clauses
- Specific language** - Choose precise words over vague terms
- Logical organization** - Arrange ideas in a sequence that makes sense

### Brevity Techniques

- Eliminate redundancy** - Remove repeated information
- Cut unnecessary words** - "The fact that" → "Because"
- Use active voice** - "The principal approved the plan" vs "The plan was approved by the principal"
- Choose strong verbs** - "Consider" instead of "Take into consideration"
- Use bullet points** for lists

### Before and After Examples:

#### ✗ Before (Unclear & Wordy):

The playground that we have at our school, which has been in existence for many years, has lots of problems and issues that are really concerning to me and many other students who attend the school and use the playground facilities during our break times and lunch periods, which is causing us to feel very upset and worried about the safety conditions.

#### ✓ After (Clear & Concise):

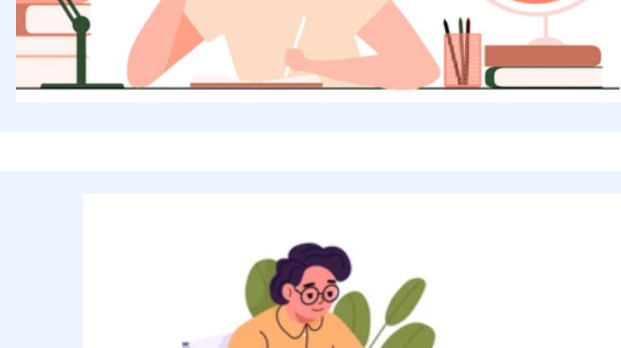
Our aging playground has **dangerous** equipment and **damaged surfaces** that concern many students. These hazards have created **anxiety** during break times and limit our recreational opportunities.

## Practice Activities

### Activity 1: Subject Line Power-Up

Transform these weak subject lines into compelling ones:

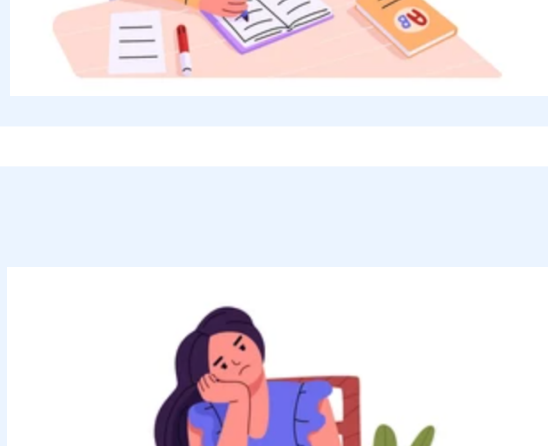
- "Playground Email" → ?
- "Help Needed" → ?
- "School Facilities" → ?



### Activity 2: Emotive Language Bank

Create a collection of emotive words related to:

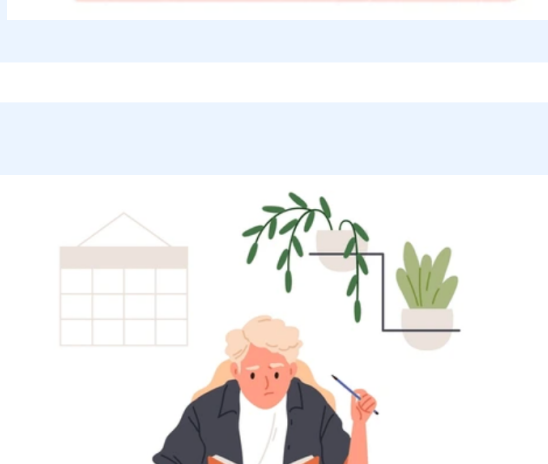
- Safety concerns
- Student feelings about the playground
- Hopes for improvement



### Activity 3: Descriptive Paragraph Challenge

Write a single paragraph describing the playground that engages all five senses:

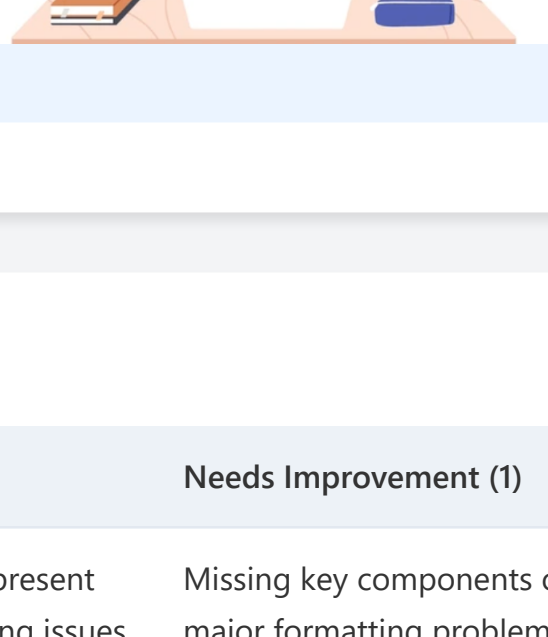
- What do you see? (Visual details)
- What do you hear? (Sound descriptions)
- What do you feel? (Tactile sensations)
- What do you smell? (Olfactory details)
- What might you taste? (Perhaps dust in the air)



### Activity 4: Register Shifting Practice

Rewrite these sentences to shift between formal and informal registers:

- Formal:** "I respectfully request your immediate attention to this matter."  
**Informal:** ?
- Informal:** "The playground is a total disaster zone!"  
**Formal:** ?
- Formal:** "The deteriorating conditions pose significant safety hazards."  
**Informal:** ?



## Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (1)
<b>Email Structure</b>	All components present and perfectly formatted	Most components present with minor formatting issues	Missing key components or major formatting problems
<b>Register Appropriateness</b>	Perfectly matched tone for audience	Generally appropriate tone with occasional slips	Inappropriate tone for intended audience
<b>Persuasive Impact</b>	Compelling arguments with strong emotive and descriptive language	Reasonable arguments with some emotive elements	Weak arguments with little emotional appeal
<b>Clarity &amp; Brevity</b>	Exceptionally clear and concise writing	Mostly clear with occasional wordiness	Confusing and unnecessarily verbose
<b>Language Control</b>	Perfect grammar, spelling, and punctuation	Few errors that don't interfere with meaning	Numerous errors that impede understanding

## Homework Assignment

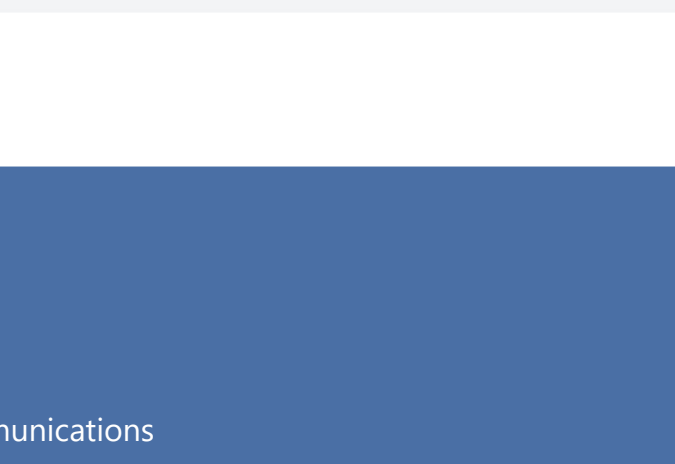
### Your Task

Write **both** emails for the playground scenario:

- Formal Email to Principal:** Request playground renovations using formal tone, persuasive evidence, and emotive/descriptive language.
- Informal Email to Fellow Students:** Gather support for your playground improvement campaign using informal tone while maintaining persuasive impact.

### Requirements:

- Include all email components (subject line through sign-off)
- Use at least 5 examples of emotive language in each email
- Include at least 5 examples of descriptive language in each email
- Maintain appropriate register for each audience
- Keep formal email to 500-600 words
- Keep informal email to 500-600 words



## Key Takeaways

### Remember:

- Email structure is crucial for clarity and professionalism
- Match your tone (formal/informal) to your audience
- Emotive and descriptive language can be powerful even in brief communications
- Clarity and brevity are especially important in email formats
- A specific, actionable conclusion increases your persuasive impact

### Next Session: Advanced Persuasive Email Writing

We'll explore more sophisticated email strategies including audience segmentation and advanced persuasive techniques!