

Section 1

#1: Opening paragraph ("Dear Josh the Doc" through "for a single lesson")

Strengths:

- Your opening clearly states your purpose right away, which helps the reader know exactly what you're asking for
- You acknowledge that the request is unusual ("unconventional"), showing you understand how it might sound to your teacher

Awkward tone shift: → Your greeting "Dear Josh the Doc" feels too casual for a formal letter, especially when the rest of your writing uses quite formal language like "sincere request" and "upcoming class session." This creates a confusing mix of casual and formal that weakens your opening impact.

Exemplar: *Dear Mr Josh* or *Dear Dr Josh* (depending on how your teacher prefers to be addressed)

#2: Second paragraph (beginning "While this may seem humorous" through "creativity as an educator")

Strengths:

- You've included reasoning for your request rather than just asking, which shows thoughtful planning
- Your point about building classroom community is relevant and shows you're thinking about the whole class

Vague supporting evidence: → When you mention "Research in education has long shown," you don't explain what research or give any specific examples of how humour helps learning. This makes your argument feel empty because readers can't verify or understand the evidence you're using. Without details, it sounds like you're guessing rather than presenting facts.

Exemplar: *Studies show that when teachers use humour appropriately, students often remember lessons better because positive emotions help the brain store memories more effectively.*

#3: Fourth paragraph (beginning "If you are willing" through "curriculum objectives")

Strengths:

- You're being considerate by promising the activity won't take too much time
- You offer to help organise the event, showing responsibility

Unclear logistical details: → You mention the class will "assist by ensuring the event remains structured and respectful," but you don't explain how this would actually work. What does "structured" mean in this situation? What specific rules or plans would keep it respectful? These missing details make it hard for your teacher to picture how the event would actually happen.

Exemplar: *If you agree, we could limit the banana costume appearance to the first five minutes of class, during which students would remain seated and attentive, and then we would transition immediately into the regular lesson.*

■ Your letter demonstrates strong formal writing skills for your year level, particularly in how you've organised your arguments into clear paragraphs. You've thought carefully about persuading your teacher by mentioning educational benefits rather than just asking for something fun. However, your writing would benefit from adding more concrete details throughout. When you mention research, tell us what that research actually found. When you talk about helping organise the event, explain exactly what that means. Right now, your letter feels a bit like a skeleton—the structure is there, but it needs more flesh on the bones.

Additionally, your second paragraph tries to pack in too many different ideas at once (engagement, memory, atmosphere, community, respect for teachers). Consider focusing on just one or two of these points and explaining them more deeply. For example, you could dedicate more space to explaining exactly how surprise affects memory, perhaps with a simple example your teacher could relate to. Your writing also jumps quite quickly from explaining benefits to discussing logistics. A smoother transition between these sections would help your letter flow better—perhaps a sentence that says something like "Given these educational benefits, I'd like to suggest how we could make this work practically."

The ending of your letter is polite and offers alternatives, which shows flexibility. However, your conclusion feels somewhat repetitive of earlier points. Instead of restating that the request is "unusual yet meaningful," you could end with a stronger statement about what you hope to achieve. Think about what specific outcome you want—is it better memory of a particular lesson? A more relaxed classroom atmosphere? Making that final goal crystal clear would give your teacher a better sense of why this matters to you and your classmates.

Overall Score: 40/50

Section 2

#1 Dear Josh the Doc,

I am writing to make an unconventional but sincere request that I believe could add a memorable aspect to our upcoming class session. Specifically, I would like to ask if you would consider wearing a banana costume to class for a single lesson.

#2 While this may seem humorous, the idea carries genuine educational value. ~~Research in education has long shown that humour and novelty can significantly enhance student engagement and memory retention.~~ **[Research in education has long shown that humour and novelty can significantly enhance student engagement and memory retention—specifically, when students experience unexpected or amusing events, their brains release chemicals that help them remember information more effectively.]** A brief, light-hearted event of this nature could refresh the classroom atmosphere, spark enthusiasm, and strengthen the sense of community amongst students. Moreover, your participation would demonstrate a willingness to connect with students beyond formal instruction, which could foster an even greater respect for your openness and creativity as an educator.

I understand that the request may appear unorthodox, and I emphasise that it is not made out of whim. The concept emerged from a class discussion about how unexpected experiences influence learning. A teacher wearing a costume, particularly one as distinctive as a banana suit, would provide a vivid example of how surprise and ~~humor~~ **[humour]** affect focus, attention, and recall.

#3 If you are willing, ~~the class can assist by ensuring the event remains structured and respectful.~~ **[the class can assist by ensuring the event remains structured and respectful—for instance, we could limit the costume appearance to the first five minutes of class, during which all students would remain seated and attentive before transitioning into the regular lesson.]** The entire experience would require no more than a few minutes at the start of the lesson, ensuring no disruption to your teaching schedule or curriculum objectives.

Of course, your comfort and consent are our top priorities. Should you prefer an alternative way to incorporate the concept, such as allowing a student to wear the costume instead, we would be equally appreciative.

Thank you very much for considering this unusual yet meaningful request. Your participation would make a delightful and memorable contribution to our class experience. I greatly appreciate your time and understanding.

Sincerely,

Wesley Liang

Year 5 Student of Scholarly