

# 5.2a

## The style of written English

- A** What is the difference between the first and second word in these pairs of words?  
get/obtain    Thanks/Thank you    I'll/I will    job/occupation    about/with reference to

- B** Match each phrase on the left with a phrase on the right.

**Informal (spoken) language**

- 1 Thanks for your letter.
- 2 I've just seen your advert in ...
- 3 Can you tell me about ...?
- 4 because
- 5 Sorry, I can't make the meeting.
- 6 Here are ...
  
- 7 What exactly do you need?
- 8 Just send the stuff back. We'll pay.
- 9 I've got some bad news. There's no more until next month.
- 10 Good news! I've just heard that ...
- 11 There isn't much left. You better move fast.
- 12 If you'd like any more details, just let me know.

**Formal (written) language**

- a I am writing with reference to the advertisement in ..
- b due to the fact that
- c Thank you for your letter dated 14 March.
- d Please find enclosed ...
- e I am afraid I will not be able to attend the meeting.
- f I would be grateful if you could send me some information about ...
  
- g Please return the goods at our expense.
- h We are pleased to inform you that ...
- i Please let me know your exact requirements.
- j If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
- k We regret to advise you that the goods you require are temporarily out of stock.
- l Please note that our stocks are limited. We advise customers to order as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

- C** The phrases below are typical of informal spoken English. Rewrite them as sentences for a business letter. Some words have been given to help you.

- 1 It's about that ad. we saw in *Marketing Monthly*. (*writing/reference to/recent edition*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Can you send us something about what your company sells? (*grateful/information/range*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Thanks for your letter of March 12 asking about what we sell. (*dated/enquiring/products*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I have some bad news. I'm afraid your order is going to be late. (*regret/inform/delayed*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 See you in Frankfurt next month! (*look forward*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

- D** Rewrite the sentences from section C as sentences for an e-mail. The style will be brief and direct.

# 5.3

## Types of business document

**A** Match each document type on the left with a definition on the right.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 an enquiry         | a a request to supply goods (sent by the customer)        |
| 2 a quotation        | b a request for information (sent by the customer)        |
| 3 an estimate        | c an approximate calculation of the cost of something     |
| 4 a counter-proposal | d the price given for goods or a piece of work            |
| 5 an order           | e a letter where the customer tries to get better terms   |
| 6 an invoice         | f a document that proves you have paid for some goods     |
| 7 a reminder         | g a list of amounts paid and still owed, sent every month |
| 8 a receipt          | h a bill for goods sent or work done                      |
| 9 a statement        | i a letter to a customer about an unpaid invoice          |
| 10 a complaint       | j a letter saying you are not satisfied about something   |

**B** Complete the sequence 1–15 with the business documents in the box.

Enquiry Complaint Counter-proposal Order, with a covering letter Receipt  
Quotation Statement Reply to an enquiry Reminder Reply to a complaint

- | Customer sends            | Supplier sends                                     |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1                         | 2  |
| 3 Request for a quotation | 4  |
| 5                         | 6 Reply to a counter-proposal                      |
| 7                         |  |
|                           | <i>Goods are dispatched</i>                        |
|                           | 8 Invoice  |
|                           | <i>Goods arrive, but there is a problem</i>        |
| 9                         | 10   |
|                           | <i>The problem is solved</i>                       |
|                           | 11   |
| 12 Payment                | 13   |
|                           | <i>The customer starts to place regular orders</i> |
|                           | 14   |
| 15 Further payments       |  |

**C** In which documents from section B would you find the following sentences?

- 1 I am afraid your minimum quantity is too high for our first order. Please let us know if you are able to reduce this.
- 2 When we opened the package we noticed that some of the goods were damaged.
- 3 We saw your advert in a recent issue of *Engineering* magazine. We are interested in ...
- 4 Unfortunately it is not possible to reduce the delivery time, but we could offer a discount of 2% for an order of this size.
- 5 Thank you for your letter of 21 April asking about ... . We are pleased to enclose our current brochure and price list.
- 6 We apologize for sending the wrong parts. This was due to a computer error in our packing department.
- 7 Please find enclosed our order for ... . Our bankers will be pleased to provide references.
- 8 We note from our records that your account for the first quarter is still not paid. We hope to receive payment of this account as soon as possible.

