

## English Worksheet



### Explore the Use of Formal Language in a Piece of Writing: The Cat

In this worksheet, students will use a series of questions to transform a first-hand eyewitness report into a formal, impersonal and concise report.

#### Key Information

<b>Topic</b>	Writing: What to Write
<b>Level (1-3)</b>	● ○ ○
<b>Questions</b>	10
<b>Key Stage</b>	KS 3
<b>Year</b>	7
<b>Curriculum Coverage</b>	Writing
<b>Curriculum Skill</b>	Purpose and Audience Awareness

Name

Date

## Introduction

In this activity, we are going to be practising the use of **formal language** in our writing.

There has been an incident. You are the police officer who has been sent to investigate.



Work through the following questions to write up your report in **formal** and impersonal language, from the statements given to you by eyewitnesses.

### **Eyewitness account:**

*Well, I heard all this banging and crashing about and I went out back to see what was going off. I'd just had my tea and Eastenders was starting so I was in a bit of a rush and I crashed into this hoodie-type bloke who was in my garden. Anyway, I knocked him over by accident so he was on the ground and I asked him what he was doing and that and he said something about a cat - I wasn't really listening - and then he pointed up at the tree in next door's garden. Anyway, over the fence I could see all these neighbours around the big tree so I went past the hoodie bloke to look and there was this cat up there, but it was a bit dark so I couldn't really see what the big deal was, until they shone a torch, the neighbours did, and then I saw that it was stuck up there, but it was dressed up in clothes, then one of the others said that it was Supercat and he laughed, and then I saw that it had a cape and red underpants on.*



You can read the eyewitness account at any time as you go through the questions by clicking on the **Help** button.

## QUESTIONS

## Question 1

To get the overall picture of what has happened, put the following events in the correct order.

*Hover your mouse over each event to see it in full.*

Column A	Column B
1st	There was a loud noise
2nd	The cat was stuck
3rd	The man gestured to the tree
4th	The witness knocked a man over
5th	The cat was wearing a costume
6th	There was a cat in the tree

## Question 2

**Formal Language**

It is important to be able to use formal language when you need to.

Could you turn this description from the text from an informal into a formal one?

*"this hoodie-type bloke"*

**Which is the best formal version below?**

- |          |                       |                            |
|----------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Answer 1 | <input type="radio"/> | A man with a hoodie on     |
| Answer 2 | <input type="radio"/> | A man wearing a hooded top |
| Answer 3 | <input type="radio"/> | A bloke wearing a hood     |

## Question 3

**Formal Language - Connectives**

The witness in this text uses the phrase "*anyway*" as a connective, as many people do in informal speech.

Re-read this extract from the text:

*"I crashed into this hoodie-type bloke who was in my garden. **Anyway**, I knocked him over by accident"*

**Which of the following connectives would be a formal replacement for "anyway" in this sentence?**

- 
- |          |                       |               |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Answer 1 | <input type="radio"/> | Consequently  |
| Answer 2 | <input type="radio"/> | Alternatively |
| Answer 3 | <input type="radio"/> | Whereas       |

## Question 4

**Formal Language - Contractions**

We often use contractions in informal language. Contractions are new words that are formed by letters from one or more words being replaced by an apostrophe.

For example: *don't* instead of *do not*, or *we're* instead of *we are*.

**Choose one contraction from the text and write the formal version in the text box below.**

*(Remember it's easy to review the introduction again by clicking on the top*

*'introduction' icon on the right-hand side toolbar)*

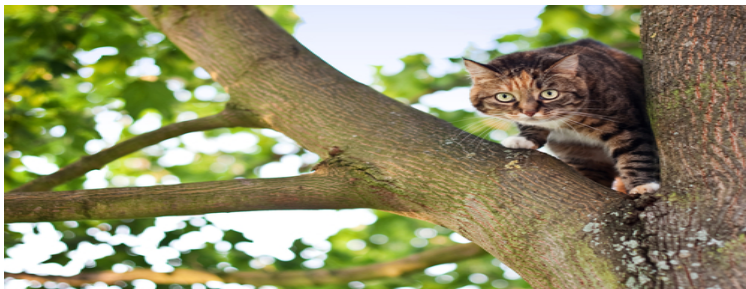
Answer1

### Question 5

**Change this sentence from personal (I could see) to impersonal.**

*"Anyway, over the fence I could see all these neighbours around the big tree".*

**Which of the following is the best option to choose?**



- |          |                       |  |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| Answer 1 | <input type="radio"/> | Anyway, over the fence I could see there was all these neighbours around the big tree. |
| Answer 2 | <input type="radio"/> | Anyway, over the fence there were all these neighbours around the big tree.            |
| Answer 3 | <input type="radio"/> | Anyway, over the fence I could see all them neighbours around the big tree.            |

### Question 6

**Transform this sentence from personal to impersonal:**

*I'd just had my tea*

*The man said that he had recently e\_\_\_\_\_ his tea.*

**Write the missing word in the answer box below.**

Answer1

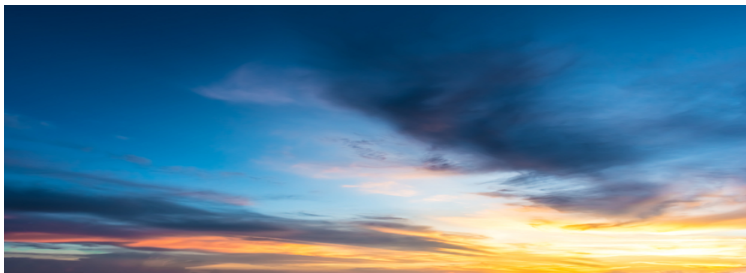
### Question 7

**Transform this extract from personal to impersonal language.**

*But it was a bit dark so I couldn't really see*

*As it was getting dark, the witness was u\_\_\_\_\_ to see clearly.*

**Write the missing word in the answer box below.**



Answer1

### Question 8

**Concise expression** means keeping the number of words to a minimum while still including all the important information - leaving out anything which doesn't need to be there.

Look back at the eyewitness account and decide which of the following could be completely removed from the text without the meaning changing in any way.

- Answer 1 ☐ I wasn't really listening
- Answer 2 ☐ It had a cape and red underpants on
- Answer 3 ☐ I went out back to see

#### Question 9

Reduce this phrase to make it more concise:

*I heard all this banging and crashing about*

*I heard a \_\_\_\_\_.*

Write the missing word in the answer box below.

Answer1

#### Question 10

Re-read this extract from the text:

*I couldn't really see what the big deal was, until they shone a torch, the neighbours did, and then I saw that it was stuck up there*

Which of the following sentences is the most concise?

- Answer 1 ☐ I couldn't see, then one of the neighbours shone a



Answer 2

☐

torch and I could see.

I couldn't see until a neighbour shone a torch on the cat.

**ANSWERS****Answer 1****Correct Answers**

Column A	Column B
1st	There was a loud noise
2nd	The witness knocked a man over
3rd	The man gestured to the tree
4th	There was a cat in the tree
5th	The cat was stuck
6th	The cat was wearing a costume

**Answers Explanation**

How did you get on? Remember, you can review the text again at any point by clicking on the top icon in the toolbar on the right-hand side of your screen. The events went in this order: There was a loud noise. The witness knocked a man over. The man gestured to the tree. There was a cat in the tree. The cat was stuck. The cat was wearing a costume.

**Answer 2****Correct Answers**

Answer 1 ☒ A man wearing a hooded top

**Answers Explanation**

Did you get it? The best example of formal language is "A man wearing a hooded top." The words 'hoodie' and 'bloke' are both informal.

**Answer 3**

### Correct Answers

Answer 1 ☒ Consequently

### Answers Explanation

Could you identify the right connective? 'Consequently' is the best replacement here, as the man wearing the hoodie was knocked to the ground as a consequence of the eyewitness running into him. Remember, we're looking for a word that can be used instead of the word 'anyway' without changing the meaning of the sentence.

#### Answer 4

### Correct Answers

Answer 1

Answer 2

Answer 3

### Answers Explanation

Did you spot some examples of contractions? The eyewitness uses the words "I'd", "wasn't" and "couldn't", which are contracted forms of "I had", "was not" and "could not". We use these contracted forms often in spoken English, but they are not acceptable in formal written English work.

#### Answer 5

### Correct Answers

Answer 1 ☒ Anyway, over the fence there were all these neighbours around the big tree.

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### Answers Explanation

It needs to be plural (as there was more than one neighbour) and impersonal (not using "I"), so "there were" is the best answer. Don't worry if you found this one tricky - we don't often use formal language in our everyday lives, so it might take a bit of practise to get good at this!

#### Answer 6

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### Correct Answers

Answer 1

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### Answers Explanation

The sentence "I'd just had my tea" becomes "The man said that he had recently eaten his tea" in the impersonal form. How are you getting on with these? You're doing well - you're over halfway through already!

#### Answer 7

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### Correct Answers

Answer 1

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### Answers Explanation

Did you get the word right? The missing word is 'unable'. It can often help us to spot the missing word if we read the sentence out loud,

#### Answer 8

### Correct Answers

Answer 1 ☒ I wasn't really listening

### Answers Explanation

"I wasn't really listening" is not important for our understanding of the meaning of the rest of the story - the other two options are. Great stuff - only two more questions to go!

### Answer 9

### Correct Answers

Answer 1

### Answers Explanation

'Noise' is the correct word here, as the eyewitness is talking about the noise made by his neighbours as they were looking at the cat. It was this noise that caught his attention and is the reason that he went outside. Did you put something different, like 'crash'? It wasn't really a crashing noise - the man describes it as "banging and crashing about" to show that he was irritated by the noise.

### Answer 10

### Correct Answers

Answer 1 ☒ I couldn't see until a neighbour shone a torch on the cat.

## Answers Explanation

To be able to answer this question, we need to understand what 'concise' means. It means to the point, the shortest way possible to say something. Does that help? The second sentence is more concise, as any unnecessary information has been taken out. Brilliant work - you've now completed this activity! Are you feeling more confident in recognising formal language?

Total score:

