

INFORMAL LETTER EXAMPLES

Sohrab

[From a boy in a boarding-school to his mother, telling her that he dislikes the life of a boarder.]

St. Dominic's

Pune 411 002

24 October 2001

Dearest Mother,

I was so glad to get your letter yesterday. Thank you so much! I read it just after morning school; but it made me feel very homesick. It seems years since I left home though it is really only about a month. It seems a month. It seems ages to the Christmas holidays, when I shall be able to come home. It was much nicer when I was at the day-school, and came home every afternoon. I do hate being a boarder. I am in a big dormitory, with about twenty other boys. Some of them are all right; but the bigger boys are always playing nasty jokes on us smaller ones and we daren't say anything, or we should get a most awful licking. The master comes round to see all lights out, but all the larking goes on after he has gone; so he knows nothing about it. And I don't like the masters. They simply make you work all day, and cane you for every fault. Most of the boys are horrid; but I like two or three.

Please ask Dad to put me into a day-school again. I should be much happier there.

With Love,

From your loving

Tommy

[The mother's reply]

Hill-top House

Matheran

26 October 2001

My dear Tommy,

Thank you for your letter. But I am sorry you are so unhappy at St. Dominic's. I don't wonder you feel rather homesick, for it is the first time you have been away from home; and I, too, often want you home again, my child. But you know, we can't always have what we want in life. If I were selfish, I would keep you always at home, for I don't like any of my children to be away; but then how would you ever get your education and grow up to be a man able to manage your own life? Your father thinks that a few years at a boarding-school is necessary for all boys, to make men of them; and he knows best. So my dear boy, you must be brave and stick to your school. I am sure you will soon get to like it, as other boys do. Don't mind the jokes boys play on you, and if you do, don't let them know you do. When they see you don't mind, they will soon get tired of teasing you. So cheer up! and be a brave lad.

With much love,

From your loving

Mother

[To a friend, about your favourite game]
18 East Road
Junglepore
6 March 2001

Dear Sharif,

Thanks for your letter, with your praises of cricket as the finest game in the world. I don't want to dispute that; but it is not my favourite. I have two favourite games, one for out of doors, and one for indoors. For exercise and interest, I like tennis best of all outdoor games. Football and hockey are too violent to suit me; cricket is too slow; badminton is childish. But tennis gives you plenty of exercise; it develops quickness of eye and limb; and it calls your brain, your thinking power, into action. A few sets of tennis in the evening keep me physically and mentally fit. For indoors, chess is the queen of games. I take no interest in card games; and draughts after chess is like water after wine. People say chess is a selfish game, because only two can play at a time. Well, I don't see that bridge is only less selfish, simply because four play instead of two. They also say it is slow. No chess-player ever says this. For an outsider it may look slow to see two men sitting silent and making a move only every few minutes. But to the two players, it is all the time intensely exciting. There is no game that absorbs you like chess. You will probably scoff; but I don't mind.

Yours very sincerely,

Lai Khan