Letter Email

Help a friend try a language exchange

Complete original B2 First exam-style writing task. One possible model response, not an official Cambridge paper or awarded examiner score.

You have received an email from your English-speaking friend Alex: "I'm thinking of joining your Saturday language exchange, but I'm nervous about speaking to people I don't know. What happens there? Do you think it would suit a beginner like me? Could we go together?" Write your email to Alex in 140-190 words. Use this situation: the group meets at Riverside Café on Saturdays from 10.00 to 11.30, welcomes beginners and talks in pairs. Joining is free, but people pay for their own drinks.

Write 140-190 words.

Write your response on separate paper before studying the model below.

One possible response

Hi Alex,

It was lovely to hear from you! I think you should definitely give the language exchange a try. I was nervous before my first visit too, so I understand how you feel.

We meet at Riverside Café every Saturday from ten until half past eleven. After a short welcome, we talk in pairs, and we change partners during the morning. There is no charge for joining, although you need to pay for your own drink.

I think it would suit you because beginners are welcome and nobody expects perfect English. Talking to just one person is less stressful than speaking to a whole room. If you forget a word, you can explain what you mean or ask for help.

Let's go together this Saturday. We could meet outside the café at ten to ten, so I can introduce you to the organiser before it starts. Let me know if that works for you!

Best wishes,
Sam

This is an original model, not an official marked script. Other approaches can also meet the task.

Understand the task and model

Answer all parts of Alex's message

Alex asks what happens, whether it suits a beginner and whether you can go together. The model gives practical information, explains why pair work helps and makes a specific invitation. Mentioning only the café or reassuring Alex without explaining the activities would leave part of the message unanswered.

Plan for a nervous friend

The opening responds warmly and acknowledges the worry. The next paragraph describes the meeting, the third explains why it is suitable, and the final paragraph arranges a visit. This order moves from reassurance to practical detail and action. Your greeting and sign-off should match the friendship.

Use the supplied facts accurately

Ten until half past eleven expresses 10.00-11.30. "No charge for joining" is qualified by paying for a drink, so Alex is not misled into expecting everything to be free. Pair work and beginner access come from the prompt. Changing partners is a plausible detail within this imagined exchange, not a claim about a real advertised event.

Support reassurance with reasons

"Talking to just one person is less stressful than speaking to a whole room" explains why the activity could suit Alex. The advice about explaining a missing word gives a way to manage a likely difficulty. Saying simply don't worry would be friendly but less helpful. The model does not promise that Alex will immediately speak fluently.

Keep the language friendly and clear

Contractions such as "I'm" in the original message and "Let's" in the response suit communication between friends. "Give ... a try" is a natural informal expression. "We could meet" makes a suggestion rather than an order, and "Let me know" invites a reply. Very formal openings such as Dear Sir or Madam would not match this relationship.

Make the arrangement usable

Meeting at ten to ten gives a ten-minute interval before the ten o'clock start, and outside the café supplies a clear place. This turns the offer of company into a workable plan. Another time or plan can work if it is consistent with the meeting schedule and answers Alex's request.

Check your own response

- Have I answered all three questions from Alex?
- Have I explained the activity and why it welcomes beginners?
- Are the meeting time and cost information accurate?
- Have I suggested a clear plan for going together?
- Does the greeting, tone and closing suit a friend?
- Have I given useful reassurance rather than unsupported promises?
- Is the complete email 140-190 words?