

2 Read the short texts. Are any of the situations similar to the ones you noted in exercise 1?

We have tried to trace your parcel and are extremely sorry to have to tell you that we cannot find it at this moment. We would like to apologise for failing to meet our usual high standards and will, of course, provide full compensation if the parcel is not located.

1

It was great to hear from you after all these years, and I'm sorry for not replying to the letter you sent shortly after I left the UK. It's amazing to think that your daughter is 21. I'd love to meet her when she's in Buenos Aires, though unfortunately, she won't be able to stay in my flat. I do apologise if that's inconvenient, but with two young children in the house I'm afraid we just don't have space! However, I'll look for a reasonably-priced hotel for her to stay in.

2

Thank you so much for the wedding invitation. However, I'm awfully sorry but I'll be in Canada that weekend. I've tried to change my travel arrangements but it's been impossible. I hope that you can accept my apologies and wish you all the best for the big day!

3

I'm really sorry I didn't make it to your birthday party. A family thing came up that I couldn't get out of. I owe you an apology for not texting you on the day, either. I hope you'll forgive me!

4

5 We regret to inform you that we will not be taking your application any further. We would, however, like to thank you for your interest in our company and wish you every success in the future.

6

Sorry about the mess.  
I'll clear it up when I get  
back. Promise!

3 Read the texts again. Which one(s) ...

- 1 is a letter to an old friend \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 are emails sent to a current friend? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 is a note left in a kitchen or living room? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 is part of a job rejection letter? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 is from a company to a customer? \_\_\_\_\_

## Writing skills: saying sorry

4 We say sorry in many different situations. Look at the reasons for saying sorry below, and write down examples of the situations in the texts.

- a Because somebody has done something wrong

Text 1: A company has lost a customer's parcel

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- b To politely say no to a request or invitation

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- c To give some bad news

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5 After saying sorry, the writer does one of the things below. Write the number of the text(s) in which there is an example of each one.

- a ask the reader to accept their apologies and/or forgive them

\_\_\_\_\_

- b say they will put right what they have done wrong

\_\_\_\_\_

- c give an excuse and/or explanation

\_\_\_\_\_

- d say what will happen if the problem can't be solved

\_\_\_\_\_

- e offer to help in another way

\_\_\_\_\_

- f wish the reader good luck

\_\_\_\_\_

## Language focus: saying sorry

7 Complete the overview of the language you can use to say sorry. Read the texts again if necessary.

### Emphasising how sorry you are:

1 I am really / so / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
sorry

I do apologise

### Saying why you are sorry:

2 I apologise/ am sorry \_\_\_\_\_ the mess

I am sorry (that) I made a mess

3 I apologise / am sorry \_\_\_\_\_ not replying

4 I apologise / am sorry \_\_\_\_\_ that's  
inconvenient

### Other ways to say sorry

5 I owe you an \_\_\_\_\_ for not texting you  
Unfortunately, she won't be able to stay

6 I'm \_\_\_\_\_ we just don't have space

7 We \_\_\_\_\_ to inform you that ...

8 We are extremely sorry \_\_\_\_\_ have to tell  
you that

## Preparing to write

8 Read the Writing task below and for each situation, decide how you are going to say sorry and what you will write after you say sorry.

## Writing

Write a short message saying sorry for the following situations.

- Your company has decided not to renew an employee's temporary contract.
- You have broken your flatmate's favourite cup but can't fix it right now.
- A good friend has invited you to her first public concert, but you can't go.
- A traveller wrote to your hotel ten days ago to say they left some belongings in their room. You can't find them, and don't think the hotel is responsible.
- A friend has asked if you can look after his children for a day when he goes to hospital for an operation. You will be away that day.

### Useful language

- We have tried to ...
- We would like to ...
- We will, of course, provide full compensation if ...
- It was great to hear from you ...
- However, I'll certainly ...
- Thank you so much for ...
- I hope that you can ...
- I'm really sorry I didn't ...
- I wish you all the best for ...
- I hope you'll forgive me!

