Read to Write
Email

Teacher's Guide

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Introduction

Thank you for choosing *Read to Write Email*, part of the *Read to Write* series from BTB Press. All of the *Read to Write* books are made up of a writing manual and a number of models for students to read before they try to write anything. In this book, the purpose of the manual is to explain basic email writing conventions in both English and Japanese so that you will have more time to focus on the actual content of your students' emails in your classes. The purpose of the models is to provide students with input of the vocabulary and structures that they will need in order to write their own email messages. Email writing is a particularly appropriate candidate for the "Read to Write" principle because of the high proportion of formulaic language that it involves.

How to Use the *Email Writing Manual*

The *Email Writing Manual* is designed to be used in two ways. The first is to give input to the students before they begin writing. Even though they will not remember everything they have read, giving them guidance on basic rules and conventions before they try to write will save you a lot of work later on.

One effective way of approaching the manual is to assign one point to each pair or group of students in a class and ask them to prepare a short presentation (in Japanese) on the point they have studied for their classmates. If you are pushed for time, however, reading the manual can simply be set as homework.

The second way of using the manual is as a tool for you to provide feedback on writing when students hand in assignments. Each of the points in the manual is numbered to make this easier. For example, if there are any problems with the layout of a student's email, write "L" on their paper and hand it back. Likewise, if a student is making mistakes with greetings, write "1," and so on. Using this system will promote a culture of independent learning in your classes.

How to Use the Checklist

The Checklist on page 17 (page 91 in Japanese) is designed to help students with self- and peer-editing. The aim of the checklist is to give them a framework for checking in a systematic way. By asking the students to work through the checklist point by point, we hope that most careless mistakes will be eliminated before the papers reach your desk. If you find that students are failing to spot a lot of basic mistakes, we suggest that you refuse to accept any email for checking until it has been properly proofread. This will foster a sense of learner responsibility, and it will also reduce your workload.

How to Use the Model Emails

The *Read to Write* principle is explained in Japanese on page 18 of the book, and an example analysis of a model is shown on page 19. Feedback from teachers who have used the *Read to Write* books in the past has been that students struggle with the methodology at first, but that once they become accustomed to it, most become able to work independently, and lessons become more like workshops. The philosophy of the *Read to Write* principle is

similar to the well-known saying, "If you give a man a fish, you will feed him for a day, but if you teach him how to fish, you will feed him for a lifetime." We believe that rather than teaching our students English words and sentence patterns, it is far more productive in the long-term to teach them how to look for and notice them by themselves. Of course, Japanese students are not used to this style of learning, and so many struggle with the new approach at first.

When they read the models, students should be looking for three things:

1. Useful **vocabulary** items (including multi-word items)
2. Useful **phrases** ("chunks" of language up to and including full sentences that can be used without making any changes.
3. **Patterns** that can be adapted by changing key words in order to make new sentences.

When students read a model, the first thing they should do is identify new words and phrases and write them in the box below the model, together with their Japanese translations. Make sure that your students are identifying multi-word items as well as single words, and check that they are using their dictionaries correctly in order to find the appropriate translation for the context. After the students have found the meanings of new words and phrases, their next task is to identify formulaic language and patterns that can be used to create new sentences by changing key elements. This can be done by underlining the key sentences in the model and writing brackets around words that can be changed, but for the purposes of review, we have found it more useful to have our students write the sentence patterns they have identified in the "Phrases & Patterns" box. You can see some examples of this on page 19 of the book.

The most common problem you will encounter is that students are unable to identify patterns within sentences. There is no definitive answer to the question of what constitutes a pattern because in theory, any word in any English sentence could be substituted for another. The key point for students to remember is that they are trying to identify patterns that they can use in order to say what they want to say. Note, however, that students should also be encouraged to identify patterns that will help them to develop their English even if the language used does not specifically relate to their own lives.

When the students have identified all the words, phrases, and patterns in one model, they should move on to the next. When they have finished reading and analyzing all the models, they will be ready to write the first draft of their own email.

At the beginning of the course, we recommend doing the analyses of the model emails in class so that students can help each other, and also so that you can give support as required. Once students get the hang of doing it, however, they should be able to work through the model compositions at home, leaving you free to use the lessons to focus on writing, editing, and revising.

Emails and Replies

Read to Write Email comprises 5 units, each with an "A" and a "B" section. Each unit covers a specific genre of email, with initial messages in the "A" sections, and then replies to those emails in the "B" section.

As with any writing course, it is expected that students will go through a number of stages before they reach their final draft. Once students have finished analyzing all the emails in a unit, they will be ready to brainstorm ideas for their own messages. First drafts should be self- and peer-edited using the checklist. After the first drafts have been peer-edited, they should be submitted to you for checking. This can either be done on paper (please feel free to photocopy the blank templates at the end of each unit) or electronically, with students actually sending their emails to you for checking. Whichever way you choose to handle the checking, make corrections and suggestions as necessary, and return the emails to the students. In most cases, they will need to revise at least once. When the final versions are ready, have the students write them on the blank page at the end of the unit so that they will have a permanent record of their work.

As the book is set up in a "message / reply" format, it would seem natural to ask students to exchange messages and reply to one another's emails. Depending on the number of students in your class and the technological resources available, you may prefer to have students actually send emails to each other (cc'd to you) instead of writing them in their books.

Supplementary Activities

Although the *Read to Write* books are primarily meant for writing courses, there are many ways in which they can be adapted for use in more general English classes. Here is a list of extension activities that have been suggested by teachers using the book.

Dictogloss
The teacher reads out key words from one of the emails, and the students try to reconstruct the full sentences. This is a useful exercise for focusing attention on grammatical structures. It can be done before the students read the paragraph or after.

Sentence Completion
Partner A reads a paragraph to partner B and stops at strategic points. Partner B has to complete the sentence. This can also be done as a class activity, with the teacher reading the sentences and the entire class responding chorally.

Reversing the Process
Although the idea of the book is that students "read to write," It may be interesting once they have completed a few units to ask them to try writing an email before they look at any of the models. This will sensitize them and make them more likely to notice the language they need as they read.

"Read to Write" with Other Material

When your students have become accustomed to the principle of analyzing texts for patterns that they can adapt, you can extend this by asking them to do it with other kinds of texts. (Graded readers would be a good resource for lower-level learners.)

Read the teacher's emails

It is easy to add extra material to the book by showing students emails that you have actually sent or received. These will be very interesting for your students, and reading authentic messages will help them to see how the language they have been studying is actually used in practice.

Dictation

Use one of the emails (or a selection of key sentences) to do dictation exercises for listening practice.

Generate Questions

Ask students to write the questions that would elicit the information given in each email. For example, if the email states that "The charge for a friend who is not a member is ¥2000," students could try to work out how to ask, "What is the charge for a friend who is not a member?" Doing this with more difficult sentences will be quite challenging for even fairly high-level students.

Contact the Authors

We have tried to make the book as easy for you and your students to use as possible, but if you have any questions, please feel free to email us at <**info@btbpress.com**>.

We hope that you and your students enjoy using the book, and we look forward to hearing your feedback on how it can be improved for future editions.

Identifying Patterns in the Model Emails

It is important to remember that there are no "correct" answers to the questions of what constitutes a "pattern" and which words can be replaced. Take, for example, the sentence below, which is taken from the analysis example on page 19 The full sentence is:

> ❖ If you are planning to come, please reply to this email by Tuesday, August 12.

The simplest way of analyzing this sentence would be:

> ❖ If you are planning to come, please reply to this email by <Tuesday, August 12.>

A student who analyzed the sentence in this way could then write a sentence like this:

> ❖ If you are planning to come, please reply to this email by Wednesday, June 10.

A narrower way of analyzing it would be this:

> ❖ If you are planning to come, please <reply to this email> by <Tuesday, August 12.>

A student who analyzed the pattern in this way might then write a sentence like this:

> ❖ If you are planning to come, please contact Rachel by Thursday, January 24.

An even narrower way of analyzing it would be this:

> ❖ If you <are planning to come>, please <reply to this email> by <Tuesday, August 12.>

This analysis might be appropriate if the student wanted to write a sentence like this:

> ❖ If you would like to join us, please be at the bus stop by 8 A.M. on Saturday.

As we hope you will be able to see from this example, the way in which a student should analyze a text depends largely on the type of sentences they want to create themselves. In other words, students need to look for patterns that they think will be useful *for them*. Most Japanese students will find this lack of a pre-determined answer disconcerting at first, but we have found that it does not take them long to become accustomed to the idea if is explained carefully.

The patterns in the following section have been analyzed as a reference for teachers who have not used the *Read to Write* books before. Three examples are given for each model. Please note that these examples are simply our suggestions, and they should not be considered in any way to be "model" or "definitive" answers. We fully expect and hope that both teachers and students will analyze the texts in a number of different ways.

Topic 1A—Invitations

Invitations 1 (p. 20)

Example patterns:

- Dear prospective members of the <International Club.>
- We've reserved <three rooms> at the <Old Town Karaoke Box> from <8:00 pm> to <midnight> on <Friday, August 16.>
- If you are planning to come, please reply to this email by <Tuesday, August 12.>

Invitations 2 (p. 21)

Example patterns:

- <My family and I> would like to invite you to <a hanami party> <this weekend.>
- In case you didn't know, <hanami> is <cherry blossom viewing.>
- The weather <this weekend> is supposed to be <a little chilly, but sunny and clear.>

Invitations 3 (p. 22)

Example patterns:

- I'll <cook dinner> if you can <bring drinks and dessert.>
- It's possible that <my parents> will stop by too.
- Anyway, let me know what <day> is best for you.

Invitations 4 (p. 23)

Example patterns:

- Thank you so much for your presentation in our class about <southern China.>
- It was both <interesting> and <informative.>
- <It> will be held in the <number 1 meeting room of the International Students' block> on <Thursday, December 5> from <11.30 am to 1:30 pm.>

Invitations 5 (p. 24)

Example patterns:

- Apparently, there's already <good snow> up at <Asahiyama.>
- If we leave at 6:30 am, we'll be there by the time <the slope opens at 8.>
- I don't have <boots that would fit you,> but you can <rent them at the slope.>

Topic 1B — Replies to Invitations

Replies to Invitations 1 (p. 26)

Example patterns:

- I'd like to come to the <karaoke night.>
- We won't be able to come before <9:00> at the earliest.
- Is it okay to come <late?>

Replies to invitations 2 (p. 27)

Example patterns:

- Thank you for your invitation to the <hanami party.>
- I've heard of <hanami parties> before, but I've never <been to one.>
- I'm really looking forward to <this,> and to meeting <your family.>

Replies to invitations 3 (p. 28)

Example patterns:

- We're going <out of town> <this weekend> from <Friday afternoon.>
- If <Wednesday or Thursday night> is okay with you, that would be great.
- We can bring <drinks and dessert.>

Replies to invitations 4 (p. 29)

Example patterns:

- I'm glad to hear that <your class enjoyed my presentation.>
- Thank you too for your very kind invitation to <your end-of-term party.>
- Unfortunately, I won't be able to attend because <I actually leave on December 2.

Replies to invitations 5 (p. 30)

Example patterns:

- By the way, <my roommate> would like to come too.
- <His> name is <Kenta,> and <he's> a <second-year> student.
- <6:30> is really early for me, but I'll be ready.

Topic 2A—Emails to Teachers

Emails to Teachers 1 (p. 32)

Example patterns:

- This is <Haruko Kimura.>
- I'm in your <10:30 Monday English Composition> class.
- Would you like me to <bring it to class next time,> or should I <turn it in to you before then?>

Emails to teachers 2 (p. 33)

Example patterns:

- This is <Katsuo Kondo> from your <American Films> class.
- I have to apologize in advance for missing class on <May 12.>
- I have to go to <Tokyo> to <visit my grandfather's grave.>

Emails to teachers 3 (p. 34)

Example patterns:

- My name is <Keiri Takahashi,> and I take your <writing> class in the <first> period on <Thursday mornings.>
- I am the one who <wears strange hats.>
- I visited your office <at lunchtime yesterday> because I need to ask you something about <the test>, but you were not there.

Emails to teachers 4 (p. 35)

Example patterns:

- I am writing to ask you about <the final test at the end of the semester.>
- I was wondering whether it would be possible for me to <submit a report instead of taking the test.>
- If that is not possible, would I be able to <take the test> on a different day?

Emails to teachers 5 (p. 36)

Example patterns:

- I will be a <sophomore> <economics> major this <fall.>
- I am interested in taking your <Business Writing> course.
- I also saw that <English Composition 101> is a pre-requisite.

Topic 2B—Replies to Emails to Teachers

Replies to Emails to Teachers 1 (p. 38)

Example patterns:

- I hope everything is okay with <your family> now.
- If you could <get together with a friend or two outside of class and have them go over your draft,> I think that would be very helpful to you.>
- On <Wednesday morning,> please bring <your first draft and your second draft.>

Replies to Emails to teachers 2 (p. 39)

Example patterns:

- Thank you for letting me know about <your absence> in advance.
- If you can, please arrange to <watch that on your own.>
- I don't have <assignment sheets> yet, but I can email you one as soon as they are ready.

Replies to Emails to teachers 3 (p. 40)

Example patterns:

- I am never at school on <Mondays.>
- I have <a meeting> from <2:30,> but it should be finished by <3:30.>
- If <I am not in my office when you come,> please email me, and I will <let you know what time I will be back.>

Replies to Emails to teachers 4 (p. 41)

Example patterns:

- I think that <your studies> have to take priority over <your club activities.>
- It would also not be fair on <the other students> if I were to <give you special treatment.>
- Please <see me after the next class> if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Replies to Emails to teachers 5 (p. 42)

Example patterns:

- <Economics> majors often take <Business Writing> and find it useful.
- Please check their website for <scheduling information.>
- Let me know if you <have any further questions or concerns.

Topic 3A—Inquiries

Inquiries 1 (p. 44)

Example patterns:

- I am planning a trip to <New Orleans,> and I would like to ask some questions about <your hotel.>
- Do you have a <private room> free for the <weekend> of <September 7th-8th?>
- How far are you from <the airport?>

Inquiries 2 (p. 45)

Example patterns:

- I saw your advertisement at <the University Career Center> for <a publicity and marketing> intern.
- I'd like to ask you a few questions about <the internship> first.
- The ad says that <it is possible to receive a college credit for taking part in the program.>

Inquiries 3 (p. 46)

Example patterns:

- I'd be happy to <house-sit> for you while <you're on vacation.>
- Do you want me to <answer the phone if it rings,> or should I just <let the machine pick up?>
- I think it's supposed to be <hot> that <week.>

Inquiries 4 (p. 47)

Example patterns:

- I saw your advertisement online for <whitewater rafting tours,> and I would like some more information about <the Wild West tour.>
- I want to take a trip with <my family,> and there are <only four> of us.
- I saw in the photos that <everyone is wearing life jackets.>

Inquiries 5 (p. 48)

Example patterns:

- My name is <junji Emori,> and I am a university student in Japan.
- I am thinking of coming to <the UK> for about <four weeks> in <August> to <do an intensive English course.>
- It is possible to <choose my own class?>

Topic 3B—Replies to Inquiries

Replies to Inquiries 1 (p. 50)

Example patterns:

- Thank you for your interest in <Horizons Bed and Breakfast.>
- That price includes <all taxes.>
- It costs <$21> and takes about <20 minutes,> depending on <how many stops they make.>

Replies to Inquiries 2 (p. 51)

Example patterns:

- Remember that if you <would like to receive university credit,> you will need to <work 15 hours a week.>
- Please talk to <the Career Center> about <their credit process.>
- We look forward to <receiving your application.>

Replies to Inquiries 3 (p. 52)

Example patterns:

- I don't think we will <get many phone calls,> since we're <taking our cell phone.>
- I'm glad you asked about <the front yard.> I completely forgot about that!
- It would be great if you could <water it once or twice.>

Replies to Inquiries 4 (p. 53)

Example patterns:

- Don't worry about <filling a raft.>
- However, I'm afraid we are not able to <take passengers who cannot swim.>
- If you would like to <book a trip> online, remember that this can easily be done at <www.roaringriders.com.>

Replies to Inquiries 5 (p. 54)

Example patterns:

- When you arrive, you will be given <a placement test.>
- We have a <student advisor> who will be able to <give you all the help you need.>
- <Her> name is <Karen Hill,> and her email address is <karen@intlangcol.co.uk.>

Topic 4A—News

News Emails 1 (p. 56)

Example patterns:

- You will also be happy to hear that <I can pay for all the extra tuition with the money I've earned at my part-time job.>
- I think I am going to sign up for <a homestay with a Canadian family.>
- I will tell you more about it <the next time I am home.>

News emails 2 (p. 57)

Example patterns:

- My faithful companion <Kiki> died <in her sleep> <last week.>
- <Kiki> was <17> years old, which is pretty old for a <poodle.>
- Thank you everyone for the kind messages you sent me when <Kiki was sick last month.>

News emails 3 (p. 58)

Example patterns:

- Last Friday <Andrew> asked me to marry <him.>
- After <the wedding,> we will be moving to <Somerville> to be closer to <Andrew's job.>
- I've just realized something—I'm going to have to <change my email address!>

News emails 4 (p. 59)

Example patterns:

- The first day, we <walked around the town> and <ate at a restaurant.>
- The next day, we went <hiking> <in the mountains.>
- I posted a lot of photos on <my blog> if you want to see them.

News emails 5 (p. 60)

Example patterns:

- Thank you for the lovely <graduation> gift.
- Before I <start work,> I am going to spend about <a week> in <Paris> with <some of my classmates.>
- Thank you again for <the watch;> it's really beautiful.

Topic 4B—Replies to News Emails

Replies to News Emails 1 (p. 62)

Example patterns:

- <Your mother and I> are very proud of you.
- Good news about <the money,> too.
- Bring <Noriko> too if you like.

Replies to news emails 2 (p. 63)

Example patterns:

- I'm so sorry to hear about <Kiki.>
- I remember how she would sometimes <ride in your bicycle basket >when <we biked to the store or the park.>
- Let me know if you want to get together for <ice cream or something> or just to hang out.

Replies to news emails 3 (p. 64)

Example patterns:

- I haven't met <Andrew> yet, but I've heard wonderful things about <him> from <your parents.>
- I saw <his pictures> on your Facebook page.
- I probably won't be able to make <your wedding> because <I'm leaving next week for a year of studying in Spain.>

Replies to news emails 4 (p. 65)

Example patterns:

- I have been very busy with <schoolwork.>
- I always feel good after <the experience.>
- As I told you, <my uncle> hasn't been feeling well lately.

Replies to news emails 5 (p. 66)

Example patterns:

- I'm sorry I couldn't be at <your graduation,> but I'm glad you liked <the watch.>
- I guess you must have done a really good job <in the internship.>
- Have a great time in <Paris,> but be careful, and make sure you send me some photos of <the wonderful buildings.>

Topic 5A—Thank-You Emails

Thank-you emails 1 (p. 68)

Example patterns:

- This is <Misayu Arai> from your <Thursday> <Basic Composition> class.
- I'm sure I will be able to <complete the assignment> by <the 24th.>
- Thank you too for your suggestions on how to <improve my speaking and pronunciation.>

Thank-you emails 2 (p. 69)

Example patterns:

- I'm writing to thank you for the wonderful experience I had <as your homestay student> <in July.>
- I learned a lot about <Japanese food and culture> during my stay.
- For me, a particular highlight was <attending the Tanabata festival.>

Thank-you emails 3 (p. 70)

Example patterns:

- Thank you so much for helping me with <my move> <on Saturday.>
- To thank you, I would like to invite <you, Gary, and Rob> for dinner <in my new place> <on Friday evening this week.>
- Let me know if <6:00 pm> on <Friday> is good for you.

Thank-you emails 4 (p. 71)

Example patterns:

- Thanks to all of you, the <27th Annual International Day of Central University> was a big success.
- <The musical performances and dances> were particularly popular, and obviously everybody loved <the food.>
- I just wanted you to know how much <the entire university community> appreciated your hard work.

Thank-you emails 5 (p. 72)

Example patterns:

- Thanks for lending me your <book,> <"Yoga for Beginners.">
- I've <read> it <twice> now, and you're right—<the explanations are clear, and the pictures are very helpful.>
- <Just doing yoga once a week isn't enough,> as the book says.

Topic 5B—Replies to Thank-You Emails

Replies to thank-you emails 1 (p. 74)

Example patterns:

- Thanks for stopping by <on Tuesday.>
- I'm always happy to <help my students.>
- If you <have any more problems,> please don't hesitate to <come and see me again.>

Replies to thank-you emails 2 (p. 75)

Example patterns:

- We had a very nice time showing you <our community> and <our country.>
- I'm attaching <my recipe for sushi rice.>
- I will probably see <Ms. Kimura> <tomorrow,> and I will pass on your message.

Replies to thank-you emails 3 (p. 76)

Example patterns:

- My <back> still hurts, though!
- <Dinner> sounds great.
- <Friday at 6:00> is good for me.

Replies to thank-you emails 4 (p. 77)

Example patterns:

- <The International Day Planning Committee> couldn't have succeeded without all your help, so we should thank you too.
- I am responsible for <typing them up.>
- I will email <them> to you by <Friday or Saturday.>

Replies to thank-you emails 5 (p. 78)

Example patterns:

- <A regular practice session> is hard to schedule, but it's really important all the same.
- If you don't <practice regularly,> you won't <see any progress or results.>
- You might find that <a regular practice> gives you a little more energy <in the evenings.>