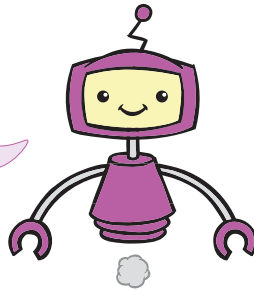


# It's hard to say sorry

An apology, they say, is good for the soul. It allows you to come to terms with your guilt, forgive yourself and begin afresh. So, Anna and Peter, what are you waiting for? 'Fess up and apologise!



## LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 16  
Learning Object 2: *Going home*

## PRIOR LEARNING:

### Stage 2

Module 8 Work Sheet 5: *Making complaints*

### Stage 3

Module 8 Work Sheet 2: *I give up!*

Work Sheet 4: *An objective assessment*

## 1 I'm really sorry

Every once in a while we all have to say we're sorry. It can be a humbling experience, but it's often an important part of maintaining good relationships with others. Let's look a little more deeply at the purpose and structure of an apology.

Knowing how to write a sincere letter of apology is an important skill that helps maintain social harmony as well as personal or business relationships.

As you have already learned, in Work Sheet 1, *The hardest word*, a formal written apology will usually include the following elements:

- an acknowledgement of wrongdoing
- an acknowledgement that the recipient has been offended or injured
- a statement of regret
- a statement committing to a more positive relationship and future.

## 2 How do Indonesians apologise?

As you have previously learned, ritual politeness, maintenance of face, social harmony and emotional self-control are all vital facets of Indonesian social interaction.

The gesture of asking for forgiveness for any errors one might make is a mainstay of Indonesian politeness. The more formal the occasion, the more frequently one makes the gesture. Indonesian speeches given at any type of formal function invariably begin with a request for forgiveness, should anyone be offended by the words of the speaker.

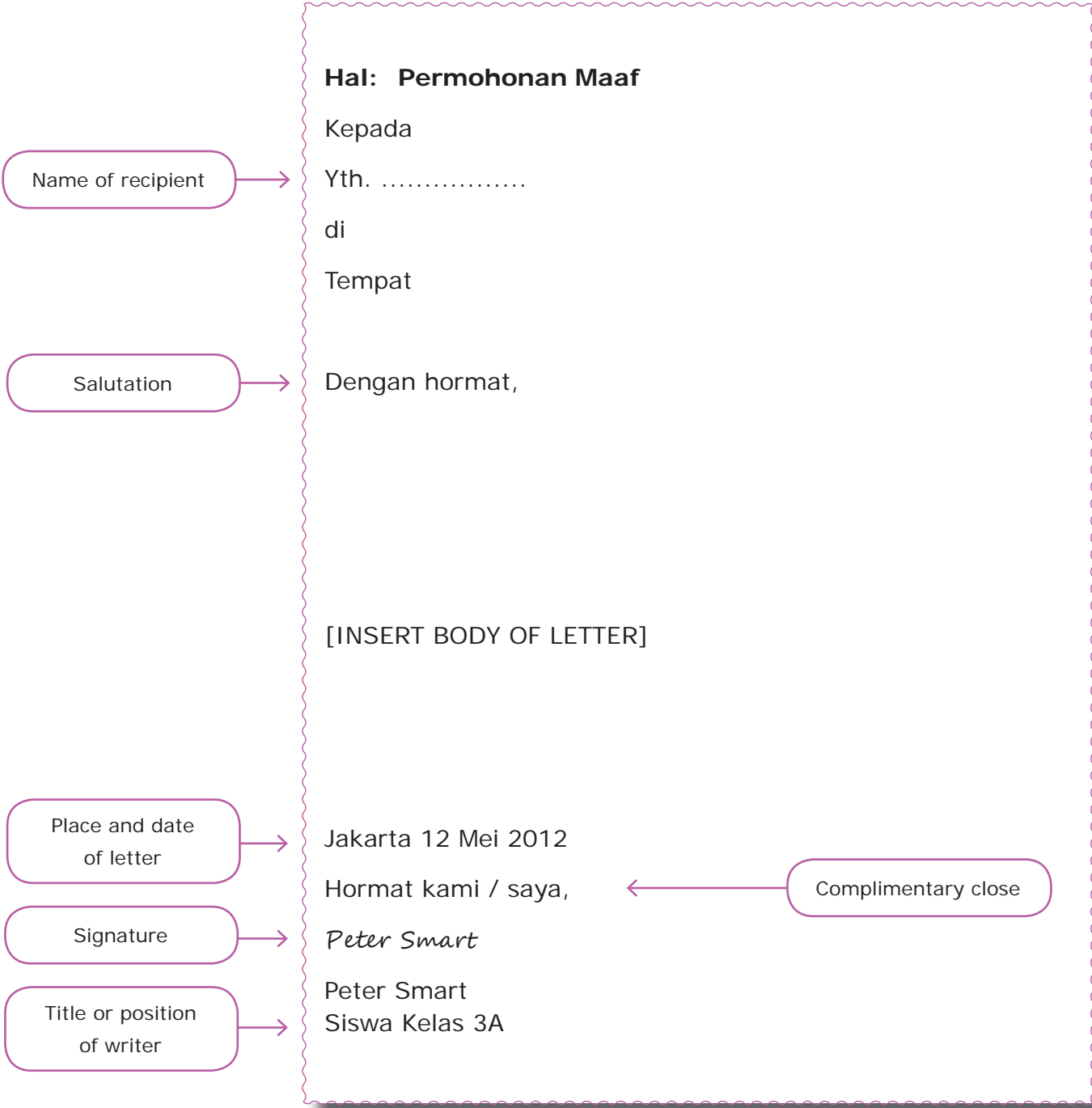
➔ For example:

*Sebelumnya saya mohon maaf bila ada kata-kata yang kurang berkenan di hati.*  
Beforehand I apologise if my words cause any offence.

\*Keeler, Ward, *Javanese: A Cultural Approach*, 1984. Centre for Southeast Asian Studies. Ohio University.

### 3 A formal apology

A formal letter of apology in Indonesian is generally structured as follows:



## Exercise 1

Examine the two letters of apology that follow and then complete the exercises.

Write your answers in English.

### Hal: Permohonan Maaf

Kepada Yth.  
Ibu Siti Zulkarnain  
di  
Tempat

Dengan hormat,

Sehubungan dengan adanya salah pengiriman barang pada tanggal 21 Mei 2011 yang dilakukan oleh pihak kami, dengan ini kami mohon maaf yang sebesar-besarnya.

Mengenai barang yang salah kirim, kami akan menggantikannya paling lambat tiga (3) hari dari tanggal surat ini.

Besar harapan kami agar Ibu bisa memaafkan kelalaian kami tersebut. Atas perhatian dan kerjasamanya kami ucapkan terima kasih.

Surabaya, 2 Juni 2012  
Hormat kami,

*Dino Priyo*

Dino Priyo  
Kepala Bagian Pengiriman

(continued on following page)

Ibu Susi yang terhormat,

Ma'af, Bu! Saya membuat kesalahan hari ini. Saya membaca buku komik di kelas bahasa Indonesia. Bukan itu saja, ketika ketahuan dan Ibu minta saya untuk berhenti membaca komik itu, saya tidak mempedulikan permintaan Ibu dan terus membaca di bawah meja.

Apa yang saya lakukan sangat tidak sopan dan tidak menunjukkan hormat kepada Ibu yang telah bersusah payah mempersiapkan bahan pengajaran untuk kelas ini. Membaca komik di dalam kelas juga menunjukkan kalau saya tidak menghargai pentingnya kelas bahasa Indonesia ini bagi masa depan saya.

Karena itu saya ingin minta maaf kepada Ibu.

Saya harap Ibu bisa menerima permintaan ma'af saya. Saya berjanji tidak akan membaca buku komik lagi di kelas dan mulai sekarang saya akan lebih memperhatikan pelajaran yang Ibu berikan.

Hormat saya,

Batara

**1.1 What is the reason for the apology in the first letter?**

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**1.2 What conclusion was reached, or consolation offered, in the first letter?**

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**1.3 What is the reason for the apology in the second letter?**

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1.4 What conclusion was reached, or consolation offered, in the second letter?

1.5 Comment on the style of the two letters, with particular reference to their similarities and differences.

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**Exercise 2**

Peter feels sorry that he cannot attend the farewell function for his departing coach at the iCafe in Jakarta, which was held just hours after the Smart family had returned to Jakarta from Brisbane.

He decides to write an apology for not attending the function and to thank him for the help and support given to him as a novice hockey player.

**Write Peter's apology letter to Bapak Harsono, in Indonesian.**

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### Exercise 3

Anna has had a virus and has been unable to complete her assignment on Mount Krakatoa. She would like to write an apology to her geography teacher, Pak Rudi, assuring him that she will complete it over the weekend. She decides to attach her medical certificate to the letter.

Have a close look at Anna's medical certificate.



Klinik Graha Medika  
PRAKTEK DOKTER 24 JAM  
Jl. Kedoya Raya No.45 Jakarta Barat  
Telp. 58198489

#### SURAT KETERANGAN SAKIT

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini, dokter pada Klinik GRAHA MEDIKA di Jakarta, menerangkan bahwa:

**Nama:** Anna Smart

**Jenis kelamin:** Perempuan      **Umur:** 15 thn.

**Alamat:** Jalan Kedoya Angsana  
No.22 Kedoya  
Jakarta Barat

Berhubung karena sakit perlu beristirahat selama tiga (3) hari terhitung mulai tanggal: 4 April 2012 s/d 7 April 2012

Jakarta, 4 April 2012

ttd. Dokter yang memeriksa

Iwan Gunawan

dr. Iwan Gunawan

(continued on following page)



