

Teaching the Topic

Bills, bills, bills. We need to understand what we are paying for, how much we are paying and when the payment is due. We need to recognise if there is a problem, for example, a bill for something we didn't get or a mistake in the amount. If there is a problem we need to know what we can do and be confident to take action.

Resources

Bills of all sorts; notices from companies (for example, electricity companies) explaining how to read bills, online facilities for paying bills; writing cheques (if appropriate).

Activities

- Recognise that this is a bill. What are the signals? Look for the company name at the top. What distinguishes a bill from a receipt?
- Recognise what the bill is for, and the fields of a bill that explain how much, and when the amount is due.
- Identify problem bills – this is not goods or services the learner received, or this amount is not reasonable.
- Role play a complaint in person or by phone to the company concerned, if this will be possible, referring to the bill.
- Discuss how to write a letter of complaint, sending the bill and keeping a copy. Discuss the parts of a letter, the format, the greeting and the ending.

Language

- *GST Tax Invoice, Total Amount Due, Current Charges, receipt, Prompt Payment Discount.*
- Complaints – *There is a mistake in this bill, This amount is not right, I would like..., Can you... please?*

Using the Worksheet

A possible introductory activity: What kind of bills does the learner get in New Zealand? Is this different from their country? How do they pay bills in New Zealand?

This activity uses an electricity bill. The learner scans for information about name, customer number, amount due, due date. The learner reads each question and finds the answer. Then they write the number of the question in the circle at the end of the line.

Main learning points

Find essential information on a bill. Identify important parts of a bill – check the bill is for the right person, find the number that identifies the customer (in case of problems), find who to call if there is a problem, find when they need to pay in order to get a discount.

What else could be learnt?

If there is a question or problem, the tutor and the learner could role play the phone call. This could be about the amount, changing the name on the account. The learner and tutor could role play changing electricity supplier over the phone.



Bills, bills, bills

Read each question below, then scan the bill to find the answer.
Write the number of the question in the circle at the end of the line.

For example:

genesis ENERGY

Mrs M A SMITH
6 RED ROAD
ISLAND BAY
WELLINGTON 6002

Genesis Power Limited
trading as Genesis Energy
Private Bag 3131 Hamilton
0800 300 400
Freefax 0800 110 999
www.genesisenergy.co.nz
info@genesisenergy.co.nz

Our Contact Centre hours are
Monday to Friday 7am to 9pm
and Saturday 8am to 5pm

Your Consumer Number
889 360 2385

Customer Service
0800 300 400

Account Date
15 Mar 2007

Due Date
29 Mar 2007

GST Tax Invoice/Statement
Statement Number 68887031

GST Number 71-067-769

Your Electricity Account - Estimate Reading

Summary of Payments Since Your Last Account

Closing Balance of Your Last Account	\$	40.21
Payments Received - Thank YOU (refer over for details)	\$	44.23 cr
Opening Balance	\$	4.02 cr

Current Account Summary

Current Charges (incl GST. Refer over for details)	\$	68.42
Prompt Payment Discount	\$	6.84 cr
Total Amount Due (If paid after due date 29 Mar 2007)	\$	64.40
Discounted Amount Due (If paid by due date 29 Mar 2007)	\$	57.56

Total Current GST Content \$7.61 (refer over for details)
Total Current GST Content After Prompt Payment Discount \$6.85

Get to know your bill

For an easy to follow guide that talks you through each part of your bill go to genesisenergy.co.nz

- What is the discounted amount?
(Smaller amount of money to pay if someone pays the bill by 29 March 2007.)
- What is the consumer's name?
(Person who has to pay the bill.)
- What is the consumer's number?
(Number the person says when they phone the company.)
- What are the current charges?
(The cost of the electricity used in the house since the last bill.)
- What is the customer service phone number?
(The free-calling number the person calls if they have a question about the account.)

