

Letter Writing

Overview:

Dear Teacher,

Learning how to write a letter will open so many doors for me. Besides being a very functional way for me to communicate with others, it will also allow me a way to express my opinions and make/keep in touch with friends. Please consider using this activity to teach me these skills.

Sincerely,

A. Student

Procedure:

1. Discuss the elements of the various types of letters.
 - a. Introduction, Formal, Complaint, Apology, Birthday, etc.
 - b. Each letter type contains specific content elements.
2. Demonstrate for the students by writing a letter (I do).
 - a. Use the key elements of the letter type.
 - b. Think aloud while demonstrating to guide the students through the process.
3. Write a letter as a group (We do).
 - a. Choose the purpose/type of the letter.
 - b. Ask for the students' input when constructing the letter.
4. Allow the students to write a letter of their own (You do).
 - a. Provide the students with a few letter types to choose from (Introduction, Formal, Complaint, Apology, Birthday, etc.)
 - b. What's the purpose?
 - c. To whom will the letter be addressed (friend, company, co-worker, family member, imaginary person)?
 - d. The teacher or peers review and revise the letters.
 - e. Share the letters by reading aloud.
5. Send the letters
 - a. Provide the students with envelopes and postage (your school office may be willing to provide these).
 - b. OR, if completed on the computer using a word processing program (Microsoft Word), send the letter via email.

ASOL Covered in this Activity:

**There is the potential to teach many writing ASOLs through this activity.
Plan assignments based on individual instructional needs of students.**

5E-WP 2a: The student will use technology (including assistive technologies) to produce and publish writing.

5E-WP 6a: The student will use technology to produce and share writing.

5E-WE 4b: The student will write routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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8E-WP 3c: The student will write routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

8E--WP 4a: The student will use technology, including the Internet, to produce writing work or research report.

HSE-WP 3a: The student will write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

HSE-WP 6a: The student will use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish and update an individual writing project.

Extension Idea: Students can write their letters using Word or PowerPoint. Encourage students to print and share their work with peers.

3E-CF 1a: The student will identify the adventures or experiences of a character(s) in a familiar story.

3E-CF 1j: The student will ask and answer questions about details from a fictional text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

4E-CF 1c: The student will use details from fictional text to describe a character in a story;

5E-WP 4a: The student will select a book and write, draw, or dictate to state an opinion about it and one reason to support the opinion.

5E-WP 5b: The student will recall information from literary and informational text to support writing (e.g., “Use details from text to describe a character in a story.” “Use details from the text to retell what the text says.”).

5E-WE 1d: The student will use spelling rules when writing by capitalizing the first letter of familiar names.

5E-WE 4b: The student will write routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

8E-CF 1e: The student will identify and ask questions that clarify various viewpoints in a fictional text.

8E-CF 1 f: The student will make connections between key individuals or events in a fictional text.

8E--WP4d: The student will use information from literary or informational text to support writing by using specific claims in a text.

HSE--WP1c: The student will write about an event or personal experience by introducing the event or experience, at least one character, and describing multiple events in sequence.

HSE--WP2c: The student will write and revise work so that it communicates clearly to the intended audience.

Extension Idea: Ask students to write to a fictional character in a familiar story. The purpose of the letter can be to relay information, inquire about a subject or event, or to criticize the person’s actions. Or, have the students write a letter from the other person’s perspective to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the person’s actions and feelings.

5E-WP 2b: The student will write information related to personal experiences and answer simple questions about those experiences.

5E-WP 10b: The student will recall information from personal experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources to include in writing.

8E-WP 1a: The student will write to convey ideas and information including facts, details, and other information.

8E-WP 3b: The student will write to convey ideas and information including facts, details, and other information as well as graphics and multimedia as needed.

HSE-WP 2c: The student will write and revise work so that it communicates clearly to the intended audience.

Extension Idea: Have the students write an Introduction letter to describe themselves. Ask them to include basic facts and details (name, age, likes/dislikes, etc.) as well as describe a significant event that helped shape their lives (vacation, birth/death in the family, going to a new school, etc.)

Materials Needed:

- writing materials (pen, pencil, paper, highlighters for revision, paper)
- topic choices
- computer and word processor software (optional)
- envelopes and postage

Instructional Setting:

Classroom

Community Connections and/or Peer Interaction:

The letters can be addressed to members of the community, school personnel, or other students.

Functional Activity/Routine:

Writing letters for any purpose is functional.

Strategies to Collect Evidence:

- Individual student product
- Anecdotal evidence can be used to document individual student performance.

Specific Options for Differentiating this Activity:

- Allow students to use their preferred “pencil” to complete this activity. This may include a writing utensil, keyboard, alternative pencil, or dictating to a scribe.
- A student in any of the developmental stages of writing can complete this activity.