

Opinion: Letter Writing

Unit Introduction

NOTE

Common Core State Standards are listed in Table of Contents after each lesson title as well as on actual lesson pages. Sometimes, in the process of revising, original lessons were deleted or moved and new lessons added. Lesson numbers were not changed, but the pages were renumbered to be sequential in each unit.

Unit Overview:

This unit teaches the structures and conventions of letter writing. It also revisits the concept of opinion writing by guiding students through the process of writing a persuasive letter.

With guidance and support from adults, teachers may wish to have students email letters as a publishing option. This meets CCSS W.1.6, “With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

Mentor Texts

Reading aloud to the class some of these books prior to teaching the lessons is highly recommended.

Letter Writing-

Giggle, Giggle, Quack by Doreen Cronin

Toot & Puddle by Holly Hobbie

Dear Mr. Blueberry by Simon James

Dear Juno by Soyung Pak

Persuasion-

Can I Have a Stegosaurus? Can I Please? By Lois G. Grambling

Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late by Mo Willems

Earrings by Judith Viorst

Persuasive Letter Writing-

Click, Clack, Moo, Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin

I Wanna Iguana or I Wanna New Room by Karen Kaufman Orloff

Dear Mrs. LaRue by Mark Teague

Two resources used in revising this unit were:

Opinion Writing Primary Grades: Common Core by Emily Bonnemort and Melissa McGary

Writing Unit of Study 1st Grade-Opinion, Writers Write Opinion Letters for Social Action by Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA)

Student Goals for this Unit:

1. Students will write a thank you, friendly, and persuasive letter that includes: date, salutation, body, closing and signature.
2. Students will use their opinions to write a persuasive letter.
3. Students will use commas in dates.
4. Students will use correct ending punctuation.
5. Students will capitalize the first word of each sentence, the pronoun “I,” proper nouns (people’s names, days, months) and titles (Mr., Mrs. etc.).

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Informational Writing: Letter Writing (1)

Building Prior Knowledge

Minilesson Teaching Point: Elicit and build prior knowledge of letter writing.
[TIP: As you pre-read the story during read aloud, discuss why the characters are writing.]

Standard:

Materials:

- Samples of letters and postcards
- Letter writing picture book such as Click, Clack, Moo or Giggle, Giggle, Quack by Doreen Cronin, or Dear Mr. Blueberry by Simon James. (Dear Juno by Soyung Pak is in the Second Grade Scott Foresman Unit 3, Week 2)
- Chart paper and pens
- Letter writing paper choice

Connection:

*“Today, writers, we will begin thinking and learning about writing **letters**. Letters are one way that people communicate. People communicate through letters for different reasons. In letter writing, like other genres, authors use an organizational format to help the reader understand the information. Just like we use booklets to write small moment stories, when we write letters, we may want to use special letter writing paper like stationery.”*

Teach (modeling):

*“To get us thinking about the **purpose** of **letters**, let’s look at the letters I have collected.” Show the examples and talk about the purpose of each. Then, if you have a book to read, share that, too. For example: “I am going to re-read parts of the story, Dear Juno, where Juno and his grandma wrote letters. Some people write letters to thank someone, to share important information, or ask someone for something. As writers, I want you to be thinking about the purpose of the letter exchange between the main characters.” Read some parts of the story where there is letter writing. “As I read, it seems like Juno and his grandma are writing to each other to get to know each other. Juno is teaching grandma about himself and his grandma is teaching Juno about herself.”*

Active Engagement (guided practice):

“Writers, tell yourself one reason you might write a letter. Turn and talk with your neighbor.”

ELD: “I would write a letter because_____.”

“Writers, let’s make a list of some reasons to write a letter.” Teacher records student ideas on the chart pack.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

*“Writers, regardless of what you are writing, it is important to think about your **purpose** and **audience**. Who is your audience and what do you want them to know? Today you may choose to write a letter to someone. There is letter writing paper in the writing center.”*

Conferring:

Ask students to tell you the purpose and intended audience for their writing.

Closure:

Give students an opportunity to share their piece and purpose with a partner or share their topic and purpose in a pop-up share.

ELD: *“I wrote _____. My **purpose** was _____.”*

OR You can share one or two letters of students with whom you conferred and have those students share their purpose.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Informational Writing: Letter Writing (2)

Model Thank You Letter

Minilesson Teaching Point: Model a thank you letter with supporting details.

[TIP: Teach the parts of a letter through the morning message and through read alouds of books that contain letter writing.]

Standard:

[Note: Purpose for writing a thank you to someone such as Schoolhouse Supplies, a special guest, field trip guide, etc.]

Materials:

- Purpose for writing a thank you to someone such as Schoolhouse Supplies, a special guest, field trip guide, etc.
- Chart paper and markers
- “Letter Format” chart (following this lesson)

Connection:

*“Today, writers, we will be writing a **thank you letter** together. We will be writing to _____ to thank them for _____.”*

Teach (modeling):

As you model each part, point out the location and name of the part on the **Letter Format** chart.

“I am going to model, or show you, how to write a thank you letter. First, since I want _____ to know what day I am writing this letter, I am going to put the date right here. When we write letters, the date always goes here.

*Next, I am going to write the **salutation**. The salutation, or greeting, is the way we say hello in a thank you letter. Most letters use the word ‘Dear’ and the person’s name for the salutation. We write a comma after the person’s name.*

*Now, writers, we are ready to tell the person what we want to say. This is called the **body** of the letter. We indent the first line of the body.”*

Continue thinking aloud as you compose the thank you letter with your students. Comment on content, indentations, punctuation and capitalization as appropriate.

*“Now that we have finished writing the body of our thank you letter, we need to do the **closing**. The closing is a way of saying goodbye. The closing goes right here and there is always a comma after it. Finally, we need our **signature**, our name, so the person will know who is writing the letter.” (In order to keep the lesson moving, keep student input to a minimum.)*

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Turn and talk - *“Tell your partner someone you can write a thank you letter to and what you will thank them for.”* (Or if your students all need to write a letter to the same person, have them share what they’ll thank that person for.)

ELD: “I will write to _____ and thank them for_____.”

Bridge to Independent Practice:

*“Writers, as you plan what you are going to write today, think about your **purpose** and **audience**, whether you write a thank you letter or something else.”*

Conferring:

Check to make sure students can identify audience and purpose for their writing piece.
Refer students to Letter Format chart to help them with the structure of their letters and how to use the letter writing paper.
Continue to support students in generating ideas for audience and purpose.
Suggest letter writing template paper if needed.

Closure:

Share letters from one or two students. Have student identify audience and purpose, of after the letter is read ask the class to identify the audience and purpose.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Letter Format

Date (Month day, year)

Salutation (Dear ____),

Body

Closing,

Signature

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Informational Writing: Letter Writing (3)

Letter Format

Minilesson Teaching Point: Identify parts of a letter and place them in correct letter format.

[TIP: Continue to teach the different parts of a letter through the morning message.]

Standard:

Materials:

- A prepared thank you letter. Make an enlarged copy of the sample following this lesson or you can cut into parts (date, salutation, body, closing, and signature) or write each part on a sentence strip.
- A poster-size template showing correct letter format (may enlarge template found two pages after this page—choose the extremely scaffolded or the lines only version)
- Letter writing paper templates offering several levels of support (samples at the end of this unit)

Connections:

*“Writers, today we will look at the main parts of a **letter** and where they go. We will identify and name those parts together. Here is a **template** that shows correct letter **format**.”* Teacher points to and identifies main parts of letter on template. *“I showed you this chart yesterday when I modeled writing a thank you letter.”*

ELD: Add visuals to the letter format chart.

Teach (modeling):

*“Yesterday we wrote a **thank you letter** together and paid attention to where the words need to be placed. I’m going to read a letter to you and while I’m reading, I want you to make a picture in your head as to where the words should be placed on our template.”* Teacher reads letter.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

“Now, writers, I have a copy of this letter which has been cut up into the main parts for us to put back together. As I hold up each part, tell yourself where it belongs in our letter.” Call on a student to place the piece on the template (or in a pocket chart). Continue until all pieces have been placed correctly.

Optional: Depending on the time of year, you may choose to have partners paste the different parts on the template directly and then reconvene to share as whole group.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

“Writers, today you will write a thank you letter making sure you have included all the different parts of a letter. I have some special letter paper here if you want to use it to help you remember where all the parts belong.” Refer to the Letter Format Chart.

“Now, writers, close your eyes and think about who you are writing to and why you are thanking them.”

Then, have students turn and talk about who they are writing to and what they are going to thank them for.

ELD: “Today, I am going to write to _____and thank him/her for_____.”

Before they start writing, teacher takes status of class. *“Writers, if you don’t have an idea, listen to your classmates as they share who they are going to write to.”*

Conferring:

Check in with students to make sure they are putting letter parts in the correct place.

Closure:

Give students an opportunity to read their letter with a partner. Partners can help each other identify the different parts of a letter; OR You can share writing from one student you conferred with and have the group identify the different parts of this student’s letter.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

PPS Second Grade Units of Writing

Letter Pieces for Lesson LW3 Letter Format

What have you been doing since we saw you in August? Are you coming to our house for Thanksgiving? I hope we see each other soon.

Ferdinand

Dear Aunt Joan,

Yours truly,

November 12, 2009

Thank you for the soccer ball you sent for my birthday. It is just what I needed so I can practice my soccer moves in the backyard.

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Date (Month day, year)

Salutation (Dear ____),

Body

(Second paragraph)

Closing,

Signature

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Informational Writing: Letter Writing (4)

Letter Writing Words

Minilesson Teaching Point: Utilize a list of words used in letter writing
[TIP: If you choose to use the optional Active Engagement, preread letter writing texts during read aloud and emphasize closings. Also, use a variety of closings in the morning message and discuss with students.]

Standard:

L.1.2.a. Capitalize dates and names of people.

Materials:

- Letter Writing Word List poster (copy and enlarge the one on the next page or make your own)
- Letter Format poster from lesson LW3
- Optional Active Engagement: Provide texts to partners such as Toot & Puddle by Holly Hobbie (or copies of a text that has letters in it)

Connection:

“Today, writers, we will look at words and word choices that people use for letter writing. We will add this resource to our writing workshop tools.”

Teach (modeling):

*“When we write the person’s name in the **salutation**, if we are writing to a grownup like a teacher, we need a title such as ‘Mr.’ or ‘Mrs.’ These titles are abbreviated, written in a shorter form. Our **Letter Writing Words** poster shows how to write some common **abbreviations** you may need in the salutation of your letter. It also shows you how to spell ‘dear’ if you need that reference.”* Point out that each abbreviation starts with a capital letter and is followed by a period.

*“When we get to the end of our letter, there are different **closings** we can choose. A closing is a way to say goodbye. If you are writing to your grandmother, you may want to use ‘love’ for the closing. If you are writing a thank you letter after a field trip, you may want to use ‘sincerely’ or ‘yours truly.’ When you write to a friend, the closing ‘Your friend’ is appropriate.”* Show each term on the chart and point out that each starts with a capital letter and has a comma after it when used in the closing.

ELD: Color code the word Letter Writing Word List and the Letter Format poster to indicate where each word on the list fits on the format.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Turn and talk.

*“Writers, think of someone you could write. Look at the **Letter Writing Words** and choose an abbreviation if you are writing to a teacher or another special grownup. Then choose a closing.”* Help students brainstorm who they can write.

ELD: *“If I wrote a letter to _____ I would use the abbreviation _____ and close with _____.”*

Bridge to Independent Practice:

*“Writers, before you start writing today, think about what you are going to write and the different resources you have available to you as a writer. When write a letter, you can use the **Letter Writing Words** and the **letter template** to help you.”*
(Resources/tools may vary according to classrooms.)

Conferring:

Encourage students to use the new resources if they need help spelling these words or placing parts of a letter correctly.

Closure:

“What resource did you use and how did it help you as a writer?”
ELD: “Today I used _____ which helped me _____.”

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

PPS Second Grade Units of Writing

Letter Writing Words

Dear	Closings
Mr.	Sincerely,
Mrs.	Yours truly,
Ms.	Best wishes,
Miss	Love,
Dr.	Your friend,

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Opinion: Letter Writing (5a) Capitalization

Minilesson Teaching Point: Capitalization.

[TIP: Insert proper nouns into the morning message and pre-teach this concept to students.]

Standard(s):

L.1.1.b. Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.

L.1.2.a Capitalize dates and names of people.

Materials:

- Sample letter with many capital letters (on chart paper or prepared for overhead or document camera)—example follows this lesson page
- Capitalized words from sample letter prewritten on sentence strips or cards
- Pocket chart for sentence strips or tape to attach cards to chart
- Headings on sentence strips (or labeled columns on chart paper):
 - (1) Pronoun “I”
 - (2) First word of each sentence
 - (3) Title abbreviations, salutation and closing
 - (4) Proper nouns (specific names of people, places, months, days)

ELD: Use visuals on the headings for each column.

- Second copy of chart with above headings for students to place sticky notes when capital letters are used
- Sticky notes for students to write name and place on chart

Connection:

*“Writers, we know we start each sentence with a **capital** letter. We also know we capitalize the pronoun ‘I.’ There are other words that need to be capitalized. Today we are going to read a letter together and notice where we see capital letters.”*

Teach (modeling):

Show headings in the pocket chart (or the labeled columns on the chart paper). *“The first column reminds us to **capitalize** the pronoun I. How many words do you think we will be able to put in this category?”* (Hopefully students will agree there will only be one word for this category.) *“The second column reminds us to capitalize the first word of each sentence. The third category is headed ‘Title abbreviations, salutation and closing.’ We talked about these special words yesterday and listed many of them on our Letter Writing Word Bank poster. Now let’s look at the fourth column on our chart. The heading is ‘**Proper nouns.**’ When we write the name of a person, that word is called a proper noun. People’s names are not the only words that are proper nouns. The term ‘**proper noun**’ refers to any word that names a specific person, place, or thing. It might be a city or county, a specific park or building such as ‘Oaks Park’ or the ‘Keller Auditorium’ or (insert the name of your school). The names of specific months and days are also capitalized.”* Point out the examples of proper nouns already on display in classroom such as months and days on your calendar, place names on a map, etc.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Read the sample letter from the chart paper or overhead/document camera. *"As I read this letter to you, put your thumb up each time I read a word that is capitalized."* Teacher underlines words as students raise thumbs.

"Let's put our capitalized words into the categories we talked about on our chart and see if all the words fit." Take each card and have students tell you what category it goes in. Move the cards into the pocket chart or onto your chart paper. You may want to have students come up and place the cards.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

*"Writers, as you go off and write today, please focus on using **capitals** when you begin a sentence or write names, title abbreviations, salutations, and the pronoun **"I."** Use our list to help you. When you use capital letters, you may come and write your name on a sticky note and place it in a column on this chart to show where you used a capital letter in your writing."* (Show the blank chart.)

Conferring:

Check with students to see if capital letters are used correctly.

Continue to aid students with letter writing structure—placing the date, salutation, body, closing, etc. in the proper spots.

Closure:

Have students read their papers to each other and notice the capitals as well as help one another add capitals where missing.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Sample Letter for Capitalization Lesson LW5a

September 18, 2009

Dear Mr. Brock,

Thank you for giving my class a tour of Fire Station #3. We have been studying community helpers and I always like to give students an opportunity to see people working.

Chad and Elizabeth were so excited to see the fire pole. It was hilarious when Marco tried on Chief Bob's fire boots and pants. When we heard the firefighter using the oxygen mask, Betsy was sure Darth Vader was coming.

We are all glad to have such dedicated firefighters protecting our community. Thank you again for the tour.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Belham

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Opinion: Letter Writing (5b) Commas

Minilesson Teaching Point: Commas

Standard(s):

L.1.2.c Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.

Materials:

- Sample letter with many commas (on chart paper or prepared for overhead or document camera)—example follows this lesson page
- Dates, sentences, salutation, and closing from sample letter prewritten on sentence strips or cards
- Pocket chart for sentence strips or tape to attach cards to chart
- Headings on sentence strips (or labeled columns on chart paper):
 - (1) Dates
 - (2) Words in a series
 - (3) Salutation and closing

ELD: Use visuals on the headings for each column.

- Second copy of chart with above headings for students to place sticky notes when commas are used
- Sticky notes for students to write name and place on chart

Connection:

*“Writers, yesterday we looked at all of the places we use capital letters in a letter. Today we are going to read a letter together and notice where we see **commas**. When we read a **comma**, we pause briefly.”*

Draw a comma to show students what it looks like.

Teach (modeling):

Show headings in the pocket chart (or the labeled columns on the chart paper). *“The first column reminds us to **use commas** in the date. The second column reminds us to **use commas** to separate words in a series. The third category is heading, salutation and closing. Remember these words are on our Letter Writing Word Bank poster.”*

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Read the sample letter from the chart paper or overhead/document camera. *“As I read this letter to you, put your thumb up each time a **comma** is written.”* Teacher highlights **commas** as students raise thumbs.

*“Let’s put all of the places we saw **commas** into the categories we talked about on our chart.”* Take each card and have students tell you what category it goes in. Move the cards into the pocket chart or onto your chart paper. You may want to have students come up and place the cards.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

*“Writers, as you go off and write letters today, please focus on using **commas** when you write the date, salutations, and closing. Also remember to use **commas** if your sentences include a series of words. You can use our list to help you. When you use a **comma**, you may come and write your name on a sticky note and place it in a column on this chart to show where you used a capital letter in your writing.”* (Show the blank chart.)

Conferring:

Check with students to see if commas are used correctly.

Continue to aid students with letter writing structure—placing the date, salutation, body, closing, etc. in the proper spots.

Closure:

Have students read their papers to each other and notice the commas as well as help one another add capitals where missing.

Reflection:**Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)**

Sample Letter for Commas Lesson LW5b

September 18, 2009

Dear Mr. Brock,

Thank you for giving my class a tour of Fire Station #3. We have been studying community helpers and I always like to give students an opportunity to see people working.

Chad and Elizabeth were so excited to see the fire pole. It was hilarious when Marco tried on Chief Bob's fire boots, coat, hat, and boots. Betsy was sure Darth Vader was coming when we heard the firefighter using the oxygen mask.

We are all glad to have such dedicated firefighters protecting our community. Thank you again for the tour.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Belham

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Informational Writing: Letter Writing (6)

Friendly Letter

Minilesson Teaching Point: Define and model a friendly letter.

[TIP: Set up pen pals with another class at your school or another school.]

Standard:

Materials

- Sample letters about the same topic, one that is very basic and one that shows detail (see samples following this lesson) to display on document camera or enlarged teacher copy.

ELD: Use sketches next to words to show their meaning (happy faces by vague words in letter #1 will suffice).

- Chart paper and markers

Connection:

*“Writers, we have been writing **thank you letters**. Now we are going to learn about a different type of letter. Today we are going to look at **friendly letters**.”*

Teach (modeling):

“Friendly letters give information. They tell someone about what you have been doing. When you write a friendly letter you need to show interest in the other person as well as telling them something interesting. We also know the importance of including details in our writing to make it more interesting. Let’s look at two letters that tell about the same event and decide which one is more interesting.”

Show the two examples and read them to the class.

“Both of these letters tell about a long weekend. Show me with your fingers which letter you would rather receive, Letter #1 or Letter #2. Now take a moment to think about why you made the choice you did. Turn and talk about your reason.”

ELD: *“I would choose Letter #___ because _____.”*

Have students share out ideas and discuss how the details make the writing more interesting. In particular, point out “cool,” “fun” and “awesome” in Letter #1 and remind students these terms don’t give us any detail and tell us what or why something was “cool,” “fun” or “awesome.” Point out that asking a question encourages the reader to write back to you.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

“First, writers, stop and think about the person you are going to write. Then think of one thing you want to tell that person. Finally think of one question you want to ask. Turn and talk.”

ELD: *“I will write to _____ because I want to tell them _____ and ask them _____.”*

Bridge to Independent Practice:

“Writers, as you go off and write a friendly letter today, remember to tell something important, use details and show interest in your reader by asking a question.”

Conferring:

Encourage students to share a descriptive phrase or a question they are asking.

You may want to continue to teach more lessons on friendly letters. You could model writing a friendly letter and teach how it frequently starts with “Dear Melissa, How are you? I am fine . . .” Then model telling one or two things about yourself (e.g., “My favorite color is green. I like Pokémon. What is your favorite color? What do you like?”)

Closure:

Share a few letters with the whole group.

Reflection:**Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)**

Letter #1

December 2, 2010

Dear Melissa,

My long weekend was cool. We did awesome things. You should ask your parents if you can go next year. It would be so fun. Write to me about your weekend. I'll see you later.

Sincerely,

Melanie

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Letter #2

December 2, 2010

Dear Melissa,

Over the long weekend we are staying at a hotel at the beach. I want to try skim boarding in the ocean waves, but Mom says it's too cold outside. My brother is trying to convince her that we won't freeze to death if we only stay out a little while. Do you remember how cold the water felt when we went wave jumping last summer? I wish you could be here now, too.

I'll bet you are enjoying your weekend at your Grandma's house. Is she going to let you bake chocolate chip cookies? Have the kittens been born yet? New kittens are so adorable.

I can't wait to hear all about your weekend!

Sincerely,

Melanie

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Opinion: Letter Writing (7a)

Identifying Topics for Persuasive Letters

Minilesson Teaching Point: Identifying topics for persuasive letters.

Standard(s):

W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experience or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials:

- I Wanna Iguana or another book that includes examples of persuasive letters
- Chart paper and markers
- Things I Want to Change paper for each student

Connection:

*“We have been learning how to write thank you letters and friendly letters. Today I want to talk with you about writing **persuasive letters**. Persuasive letters are another type of opinion writing.”*

Teach (modeling):

“When you persuade someone, you convince that person to do something by giving specific reasons why that person should help you or give you something or do something. For example, you may try to persuade your parents to help you clean your room or buy you a new toy or let you stay up later. Remember I Wanna Iguana? Alex is trying to persuade his mom to let him have the iguana.” Read some examples and point out the reasons Alex provides his mom.

ELD: Show illustrations as you review the plot of the mentor text. Add visuals to student created chart of ideas for persuasion.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

“Now think of something you would like to change. It could be something at home or something at school. For example, you could want a later bedtime, or you could want the cafeteria to serve ice cream at lunchtime.

Brainstorm a list of things students might want to change. Chart the topics.

ELD: Sketch pictures on the chart.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

Pass out the Things I Want to Change paper.

“Writers, now you will return to your writing spots and create a list of things you would like to change. When you have finished, you may work on a letter you haven’t finished yet or start another one.”

Conferring:

Help students brainstorm ideas as needed.

Closure:

Have students share one idea from their lists.

Reflection:**Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)**

Name _____

Things I Want to Change

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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Opinion: Letter Writing (8a)

Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer: Who and What

Shared Writing Teaching Point: Selecting a topic and identifying an audience.

Standard(s):

W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

Materials:

- Chart paper and marker
- Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Letters (see sample on next page) on the overhead or document camera, or prewrite it on chart paper
- Individual copies of Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer for students
- Premade sentence frame: I want _____ to _____.

Connection:

“Writers, yesterday we created lists of things we would like to change. Today we are going to identify and select our audience; the person we will write our letter to.”

Teach (modeling):

“Let’s write a list of people we could write to about the changes we would like to make.”

Create a list of people (audiences).

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Have students take out their topic lists from the previous lesson.

“Reread your topic list and circle the topic you want to write about.” Model circling a topic on the topic chart. *“Now think about whom you would like to write to.”* Provide the following sentence frame: I want _____ to _____. *“Turn and tell you partner who you will write to and what you will write.”*

Show the graphic organizer.

*“We are going to use this Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer to help us. Let’s begin by writing the name of the person we want to persuade on this line labeled **who**.”* (Fill in your audience.) *“Then we will write what we want that person to do on this line labeled **what**.”* (Fill in your purpose.)

Bridge to Independent Practice:

Pass out student copies of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

“Writers, now you are going to fill in the first section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer. When you are finished, continue writing letters.”

Conferring:

Provide support as students fill out the first section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Closure:

Pop-up share topic sentences.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Name _____

Date _____

Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer

TOPIC:

I want _____ to _____.
(who) (what)

REASONS:

1. _____

2. _____

Closure:

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Opinion: Letter Writing (8b)

Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer: Reasons

Shared Writing Teaching Point: Supplying reasons for an opinion.

Standard:

CCSS W.1.1 Write opinion pieces, in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

Materials:

- Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Letters (see sample with previous lesson) on the overhead or document camera, or prewrite it on chart paper
- Student copies of Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer from previous lesson
- I Wanna Iguana
- Premade chart labeled: **What does Alex want?** and **How does Alex convince his mom?**

Connection:

*“Writers, yesterday we wrote a topic sentence that included what we wanted to change and who we wanted to make that change. Today we will add **reasons** to our graphic organizer.”*

Teach (modeling):

“Remember the story, I Wanna Iguana. What does Alex want?” Write the students’ response on the chart. (i.e., Alex wants a pet iguana.) “Think of one reason that Alex wrote to his mom to convince her. Turn and talk to your partner. Let’s add some of those reasons to our chart.” Have students share out reasons. List these on the chart. (i.e., Iguanas are quiet and cute. I’ll put it on the dresser in my room. I’m lonely!)

“Remember when we wrote our opinion pieces, just like Alex, we wrote reasons to support our opinions. Now we need to think of reasons that support our opinion and add them to our graphic organizer.”

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Display the teacher copy of the graphic organizer and reread the topic sentence out loud. *“Writers think about their reasons and then choose the best or most convincing ones.”* Have the class help you come up with several reasons that support your topic sentence. Then choose two to write on the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Have students take out their Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

“Reread your topic sentence. Think about two reasons that support the change you want made.” Provide the following sentence frames: One reason is _____. Another reason is _____. I think _____. I feel _____.

Note: Feel free to pull out vocabulary charts from the Author Study/Opinion Unit.

“Turn and tell your partner what you will write on your graphic organizer.”

Bridge to Independent Practice:

“Writers, now you are going to fill in the reason section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer. When you are finished, continue writing letters.”

Conferring:

Provide support as students fill out the reasons section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Closure:

Have students read their two reason sentences to a partner.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Opinion: Letter Writing (8c)

Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer: Closure

Shared Writing Teaching Point: Writing a conclusion sentence to provide a sense of closure.

Standard(s):

W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic, or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

L.1.1.g Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, so, because).

Materials:

- Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Letters (see sample on next page) on the overhead or document camera, or prewrite it on chart paper
- Individual copies of Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer for students
- Vocabulary for Concluding an Opinion Chart (found in Author Study/Opinion Unit)

Connection:

*“Writers, yesterday we added **reasons** to our graphic organizer. Today we will write the **conclusion sentence**. Remember, a **conclusion sentence** provides your reader with a sense of closure.”*

Teach (modeling):

Show students the teacher Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer. Reread through the completed sections with the class. Point to the final section, **Conclusion**.

*“Today we will fill in this section. When we write a persuasive letter we want to end our letter with a **conclusion sentence**. A **conclusion sentence** restates the topic sentence or opinion using different words.”*

Display the Vocabulary for Concluding an Opinion chart. Read through the sentence starters as a class.

Model writing the **conclusion sentence** on the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Have students take out their Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

*“Reread your **topic sentence**. Now look at the Vocabulary for Concluding an Opinion, and think about how you will use one of these sentence starters to restate your opinion. Turn and tell your **conclusion sentence** to a partner.”*

Have a few students share out their **conclusion sentences**.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

“Writers, now you are going to fill in the conclusion section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer. When you are finished, continue writing letters.”

Conferring:

Provide support as students fill out the conclusion section of the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Closure:

Pop-up share conclusion sentences.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Opinion: Letter Writing (9a)

Drafting a Persuasive Letter

Minilesson Teaching Point: Model writing a persuasive letter using the Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer.

Standard(s):

W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic, or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

Materials:

- Teacher Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer completed
- Chart paper and markers (or paper and pen to use on document camera or overhead)

Connection:

*“Yesterday we finished planning our persuasive **letters**. Today we are going to use the information on our graphic organizer to write a **persuasive letter**.”*

Teach (modeling):

“I know letters need a date so I will start by putting the date here.” Indicate the correct location on the paper and write the date. *“The name of the month always starts with a capital letter, and I know I need a comma after the day.”*

*“Next, I am going to write the **salutation**. I can see on our organizer that we are writing this letter to _____. For the salutation, I’ll write ‘dear’ on this line and use a capital letter for ‘Dear.’”* Talk out whether or not you are using an abbreviated title and how to capitalize and punctuate the rest of the salutation.

*“Now, writers, it is time to write our **topic sentence**. Then we will write our reasons. Finally, we will write our **conclusion sentence**.”* Continue thinking aloud as you compose the persuasive letter with your students. Comment on content, punctuation, and capitalization as appropriate.

*“Now that we have finished writing the body of our persuasive letter, we need to choose the **closing**. Let’s look back at I Wanna Iguana, and see how Alex closes his letters. Reread a few of Alex’s letters and chart his closings. I’ll also look at the **Letter Writing Words**. Now I will choose a closing that is appropriate for our persuasive letter.”* Talk through choosing an appropriate closing, placing it in the correct location, and adding the comma.

*Finally, we are ready for our **signature** so the person will know who is writing the letter.*

ELD: Good support from graphic organizer with sketches and modeling the transfer from graphic organizer to letter draft.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Have students take out their graphic organizers.

“Reread your graphic organizer to make sure that you are ready to write your letter today. On the back, write how you will close your letter.” Point to the closings chart.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

“Writers, use your own Persuasive Letter Graphic Organizer to write a persuasive letter.”

Conferring:

Assist students as needed with writing letters. Because letters tend to be short, this is a good time to assist students with punctuation and capitalization of sentences.

Closure:

Choose a persuasive letter or two with specific reasons included to share with the whole group.

Reflection:

Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)

Opinion: Letter Writing (10a)

Proofreading/Using a Checklist

Minilesson Teaching Point: Editing/Using a checklist.

Standard:

L.1.1.b Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.

L.1.2.a Capitalize dates and names of people.

L.1.2.c Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.

Materials:

- Sample letter to use with **Letter Writing Checklist** (could be one of the letters you wrote together as a class or there is a sample following this lesson)
- Enlarged copy (or poster) of **Letter Writing Checklist**
- Individual copies of Letter Writing Checklist

ELD: Use visuals or sketches on the checklist.

Connection:

*“Writers, we have learned the parts of a letter and where each part belongs on our paper. We also know where to use capital letters and punctuation. When we write a letter, we are trying to give our reader a message. In order to do that, the reader must be able to read and understand our writing. Today we are going to use a **checklist** to make sure we have completed all the necessary steps so our letter is ready to deliver or send.”*

Teach (modeling):

Display the large checklist. Read through all the items together. *“Writers, help me review this letter using the checklist.”* (Display sample letter.) *“First we will check to see if the letter has all the parts including date, salutation, body, closing and signature.”* Demonstrate looking over the letter to determine whether it meets these criteria. Model marking “yes” or “no” on the checklist next to each part.

Active Engagement (guided practice):

Continue through all the items on the list, making sure you let students give input on whether or not the criteria has been met and why.

“Is there a comma in the date?” You may want to ask a student to come up and mark the checklist.

“Now we will look for ending punctuation.” Ask students to point out the punctuation and note if any is missing or incorrect.

“Finally, we will check for capital letters at the beginning of sentences, for the pronoun ‘I,’ and at the beginning of proper nouns and titles.” Students share what they notice.

Bridge to Independent Practice:

Pass out student copies of the checklist.

“Writers, now you are going to use this checklist to make sure your letter is ready to send or deliver.”

Conferring:

Check in with writers to make sure they are actually looking at the letter and criteria and not simply checking off all the items on the list.

Closure:

Students share letters and checklists with partners noticing if the checklist has been completed accurately; OR Show one student’s checklist and letter. Not everything has to be completed on the checklist (which is actually good for students to see.)

CELEBRATION: Students may give, send, or mail their letters.

Reflection:**Resources & References: (adapted from, acknowledgments)**

February 23 2009

Dear Mrs smith,

I thought you woud like to know that ten of the twelve eggs you gav us hatcht yesterday. The litle chicks are so cute. Their feathers are yellow the chicks are tiny and louder then i expected. When thay are grown, I will send them back to you to liv on yur farm. You can cum and visit if you want.

Sincerely,

felicia

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Letter Writing Checklist	Yes	No
My letter has all the parts:		
date		
salutation		
body		
closing		
signature		
I have correct punctuation:		
My letter has a comma in the date		
I have ending punctuation.		
I have capital letters:		
at the beginning of each sentence.		
for the pronoun "I"		
at the beginning of each proper noun and abbreviation (Mr. Mrs.)		

Name: _____ Date: _____

Letter Writing Checklist	Yes	No
My letter has all the parts:		
date		
salutation		
body		
closing		
signature		
I have correct punctuation:		
My letter has a comma in the date		
I have ending punctuation.		
I have capital letters:		
at the beginning of each sentence.		
for the pronoun "I"		
at the beginning of each proper noun and abbreviation (Mr. Mrs.)		

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Mentor Texts

Letter Writing

(These books include letters/postcards. This list is by no means all inclusive.)

Ada, Alma Flor. Dear Peter Rabbit.

Ada, Alma Flor. With Love, Little Red Hen.

Ada, Alma Flor. Yours Truly, Goldilocks.

Ayres, Katherine. A Long Way.

Bradby, Maire. The Longest Wait.

Brill, Marlene Targ. Bronco Charlie and the Pony Express.

Carter, Don. Send It!

Caseley, Judith. Dear Annie.

Cassels, Jean. Br'er Rabbit Captured.

Colbert, Jan and Harms, Ann McMillan, editors. Dear Dr. King Letters from Today's Children to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Cronin, Doreen. Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type.

Cronin, Doreen. Giggle, Giggle, Quack.

Cuneo, Mary Louise. Mail for Husher Town.

Danneberg, Julie. First Year Letters.

Day, Alexander. Special Deliveries.

Dragisic, Patricia. How to Write a Letter.

Dunbar, Joyce. The Secret Friend.

Edwards, Pamela Duncan. Dear Tooth Fairy.

Fleming, Candace. Boxes for Katje.

Gravett, Emily. Meerkat Mail.

Harrison, Joanna. Dear Bear.

Hobbie, Holly. Toot & Puddle.

James, Simon. Dear Mr. Blueberry.

Keats, Ezra Jack. A Letter to Amy.

Kelly, Irene. A Small Dog's Big Life: Around the World with Owney.

Leedy, Loreen. Messages in the Mailbox.

McDonald, Joyce. Mail-Order Kid.

Moss, Marisa. Luv, Amelia, Luv, Nadia.

Nolen, Jerdine. Plantzilla.

Orloff, Karen Kaufman. I Wanna Iguana.

Pak, Soyung. Dear Juno.

Papademetriou, Lisa. My Pen Pal, Pat.

Pattison, Darcy. The Journey of Oliver K. Woodman.

Pattison, Darcy. Searching for Oliver K. Woodman.

Poydar, Nancy. Mailbox Magic.

Ross, Lillian Hammer. Buba Leah and Her Paper Children.

Ross, Tony. Little Wolf's Diary of Daring Deeds.

Rylant, Cynthia. Mr. Griggs' Work.

Shea, Kitty. Out and About at the Post Office.

Steffensmeier, Alexander. Millie Waits for the Mail.

Stevens, Janet and Susan Stevens Crummel. Help Me, Mr. Mutt! Expert Answers for Dogs with People Problems.

Stewart, Sarah. The Gardener.

Trumbauer, Lisa. What Does a Mail Carrier Do?

Tunnell, Michael O. Mailing May.

Williams, Vera B. Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea.

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Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

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Letter Writing

- can invite, thank, share information or persuade
- includes a date, salutation, body, closing and signature
- is made public when you send it

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End of Unit Checklist: Opinion: Letter Writing

	Marking Key: X = Independently / = With Support — = Not Yet Demonstrating STUDENTS	Writes a letter including all 5 parts.	Writes a letter to persuade.	Spells most high frequency words.	Uses correct ending punctuation.	Uses commas correctly in dates.	Uses correct capitalization.	
1.								
2.								
3.								
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5.								
6.								
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