

# Typing a Personal Business Letter

Learning to type a personal business letter can easily be coordinated with an English curriculum. If you are teaching this skill as a computer teacher, you may want to use a team teaching approach with an English teacher.

Hand out a sample letter to each student. Discuss some of the benefits of effective letter writing:

- A properly typed letter will be more likely to receive respect from the recipient; therefore, it will be taken more seriously. Similar to first impressions when meeting someone.
- It is a visual expression of your thoughts that can be reread for clarification—unlike a conversation where statements can more easily be forgotten or misconstrued.
- It is proof of your statement; particularly if sent through registered mail.

Explain the layout of the letter:

- Spacing between parts of the letter is made so the reader can quickly identify the information contained in each part.
- When discussing the return address, you may want to ask “*Why do you think your name is excluded from the return address?*” It should be stated that there is no need since it will be typed and signed at the bottom.
- The date should be spelled out so the month is typed in letters (not numbers).
- The inside address contains the full name of the recipient. If a name is not known, perhaps a department (such as Customer Service) or just the company name will be inserted.
- The greeting contains a courtesy title before the

**Tip:** Asking questions is a great way to keep students interested. A few sample questions have been provided throughout the lesson plan.

recipient's name (Mr. Mrs. Ms. or Miss). Explain that when the

Needed:

- Students in Grade 6-8
- Computer with Microsoft Word
- Sample Letter for each student

recipient is not known, a general greeting such as *Dear Sir or Madam*, or *To Whom It May Concern* may be used.

- The body contains the guts of the letter. Point out that each paragraph is separated by a double space.
- The letter should end with a respectful closing such as “Sincerely” or “Yours truly.”
- When discussing the large space between the closing and typed full name of the sender, you may want to ask, “*Why do you think there is so much space after the closing?*” The answer should be so there is enough room for a signature.

Have students:

- Open Microsoft Word.
- Set the font to Times New Roman; size 12. Remind them that this standard was set for a general ease of reading.
- Set top, bottom, left and right margins to 1”.
- Position the cursor so it appears 1.9 inches from the top of page—do this by entering 5 times. Tell students that the second page of a letter remains at a 1” margin.

Students should be ready to begin typing the sample letter which should be easy to follow for most students in this age group. Let them know you would like to proofread each letter when they are finished. Help them to correct any grammatical errors.

Printing is optional.



# Business Letter Format

1.9 " or 5 Enters

Change left, right, top and bottom page margins to 1 " .

*Heading* { Your Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ *Return address*  
City, State Zip Code  
May 27, 2009 \_\_\_\_\_ *Date*

*4 Enters*

*Inside Address* { Ms. Jane Fields  
Harvest Oats  
P.O. Box 234  
Plain Field, MI 49013

*Double Space*

Dear Ms. Fields: \_\_\_\_\_ *Greeting*

*Double Space*

*Body* { I bought a box of Harvest Oats Corn Flakes yesterday. I was excited about getting the super ball toy that was supposed to be inside the box. However, when I opened the box this morning there was no toy inside.

*Double Space*

I would like it if you sent me the super ball. How long will it take? I am very disappointed and hope it will come very soon!

*Double Space*

Sincerely, \_\_\_\_\_ *Closing*

*4 Enters* \_\_\_\_\_ *Your signature will go here*

Your Full Name (type your first name, middle initial, and last name here)