

Narrative Writing Class Lesson 5

Here is what you will learn in this lesson:

- I. Writing a Friendly Letter.
- II. Addressing the Envelope.
- III. Creating Observation Diaries.



Writing a Friendly Letter

Writing to a friend or a relative is the easiest kind of letter to write. Because you know the person's background and interests, finding something to write about is effortless. All you have to do is write from your heart and use your creativity.

Friendly letters are often handwritten on stationery. If you choose to handwrite your letter, make sure you use your neatest writing. You may also want to choose some special stationery to write your letter on; if so, you can find quite a few fun stationery prints with envelopes to match at your local stationery store.

Friendly Letters have five (5) main sections: heading, salutation, body, closing, and signature. Let's take a look at each of these individually, and then we will look at an example of a friendly letter.

Heading

The heading is written in the upper right-hand corner of a friendly letter. It includes your address and the date. On the first line, you will write your street address. On the second line, you will write your city, state, and zip code. On the third line, you will write the date. Although you should always include the date in your heading, you may leave out your address, if you prefer.

Example: 123 Banjo Way
Olympia, WA 98501
August 15, 2009

Salutation or Greeting

The salutation or greeting is how you say “hello.” The salutation or greeting starts two lines below your heading and is written on the left-hand margin of your paper. Begin your greeting with the word *Dear*, followed by the name of the person who will receive the letter. Capitalize all of the words in a greeting and follow the person’s name with a comma (,).

Example: *Dear Mary,*

Body

The body is the main part of your letter and is the place where you will share information and ideas with the friend to whom you are writing. It begins directly below your salutation on the left-hand margin of your paper. The first line is indented. Be sure to share information about fun or interesting experiences you have had recently. When writing about your recent experiences, consider whether your friend would enjoy hearing about them. You also will want to answer any questions you may have been asked when your friend last wrote to you. You will want to ask one or two questions about what is going on in your friend’s life as well. Remember to start a new paragraph each time you begin to write about a new idea or subject. Indent the first line of each new paragraph.

Closing

The closing is where you say “goodbye.” The first word of the closing begins with a capital letter, and a comma follows the closing. To write the closing, skip two lines after the body of your letter, and in the middle of your paper, begin writing your closing.

Examples: *Your friend,*
Sincerely,
With love,

The Signature

Directly below your closing, you will add your signature. Usually the person you are writing is a close friend or someone you know well, so you will only write your first name.

Example: *Brian*

Example of a Friendly Letter

<i>Heading</i>	123 Banjo Way Olympia, WA 98501 August 3, 2004
Dear Eileen, <i>{Salutation or Greeting}</i>	
<p>It has been so long since we last talked. I can't believe how busy I have been lately with the children. We recently joined the YMCA and have been swimming almost every day. Dorothy and Katherine are taking gymnastics classes; they look so cute trying to do their somersaults. Amber, of course, has been riding every day. She and Nellie are really enjoying all the nice weather. Paul has been keeping busy with all his projects. Recently, he moved our pool because it was leaning to one side. It took him four days and two truckloads of sand to make a nice level spot for the pool.</p>	<i>Body</i>
<p>How are things going for you? Did you have a nice trip to Oregon? I sure hope the weather was pleasant. You asked if I had ever been to Portland in your last letter. Actually, Paul and I took the girls to the Portland Zoo last year, and we all enjoyed it so much! They have a neat train ride you can go on that takes you through the park. I was thinking that since Oregon is between our two states, maybe we all can meet somewhere and have a family reunion next summer. It would be so nice to see you and your family again. I look forward to hearing from you soon so I can hear all about your trip to Oregon.</p>	
Much love, <i>{Closing}</i>	
<i>Juli {Signature}</i>	



Addressing the Envelope

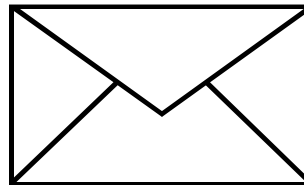
Once you have written your letter and have proofed it, you are ready to address the envelope. Addressing an envelope is done in the same manner no matter what kind of letter you are writing. Follow these simple steps to address your envelope.

Step 1: Place your envelope on a flat surface, front side up. The front of the envelope is the side you will be writing on, and the back of the envelope is the side with the flap that lifts up so you can insert your letter. Here is a picture of how the front and back should look.

Front:



Back:



Once you have positioned your envelope correctly, you are ready to begin addressing it.

Step 2: Start by writing your return address. The proper place to write your return address is in the top left-hand corner of the envelope. On the first line, you will write your first and last name. On the second line, you will write your street address. On the third line, you will write your city, state and zip code. **Including your return address is very important, as it will be used to return the letter to you if your letter is unable to be delivered.**

Place your return address here. 

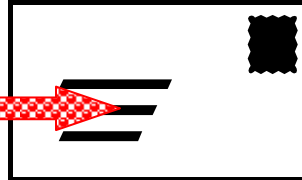
Example: Debbie Daniels
456 Willow Street
Edgar, MN 01234



Step 3: Now you are ready to address the letter. The proper place to write the recipient's address is in the middle of the envelope. On the first line, you will write the first and last name of the recipient. You also may want to use the appropriate title, (i.e. Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc.), especially if it is a grandparent or an adult friend. On the second line, you will write the person's street address. On the third line, you will write his/her city, state, and zip code.

Place the recipient's address here.

Example: Mr. Samuel Jones
1234 Main Street
Denver, CO 80231



Step 4: Now that you have your envelope addressed, you are ready to place the stamp on the envelope. The proper place for the stamp is in the upper right-hand corner of the envelope. Every envelope must have a stamp or it will not be delivered. Most letters need only one stamp, but if your letter is especially heavy or odd shaped, you may need more postage. If you are unsure, ask your parents or the postal carrier how many stamps your letter will need to be delivered.

Just a note: The post office has many interesting and fun stamps to choose from, so next time you are at the post office, ask to see all the different stamps they have for sale.



Place the stamp here.

Letter Folding Tip

Before placing your letter into the envelope, fold it neatly into thirds. With your letter face up, start at the bottom and fold inward and upward to just below your greeting and slightly into the first paragraph. Then fold inward and upward again, so that your letter is a one-third of its original size. If it is too long to fit into the envelope, fold it in neatly on the short side until it is the right size to fit into the envelope.



Creating Observation Diaries

Recently, our family observed the metamorphosis of caterpillar to butterfly. It was interesting and amazing to see these caterpillars go from being very tiny to astonishingly enormous in such a small amount of time. It seemed that I would look at them in the morning, and then by noon they had grown remarkably. From the beginning, our family kept an observation diary on the caterpillars' daily—and sometimes hourly—changes. These tiny little creatures became part of our family for three weeks, and when it came time to release our little friends, we were thankful for everything we learned about their life cycle.

Observation diaries are used to record observations and changes to objects as well as non-human creatures in our environment. They are useful in helping us to see all the little things going on around us that we typically miss either because we are too busy, or because the changes are so subtle we don't even notice them.

In this class, you will keep an observation diary on an object or non-human creature. You will write down what happens with the object or creature and how it changes over a period of three (3) days. You then will write a brief paragraph that sequentially narrates your observations. Follow the steps below to help you set up your observation diary.

Steps to Setting Up Your Observation Diary

Step 1: Decide on an object or creature to observe. Remember, you will be observing it for three days, so choose something that you will be able to observe for this period of time.

Step 2: Using notebook paper, write the title of your observation diary.
Your title should say: Observing my _____ OR
 Observing the _____.

Step 3: Under your title, you will put the day and date of your first observation diary entry. You then will observe your object or creature for a period of time (around 10 minutes). Write down exactly what you observe your object or creature doing. Write down all the little things you notice, and any feelings you have about what you are observing. Note any changes. Use vivid verbs, lively adverbs, and descriptive adjectives when writing your observation diary entries.

Step 4: Continue to make your observation diary entries for two more days, making sure to write the day and date for each separate entry. Be sure to include a note about anything that has changed from the previous day.

Example of an Observation Diary

Observing my Chair

Monday, 2/3: The dark brown wooden chair has a tall, straight back with three slats that run left to right. The comfortable seat is upholstered in a red-and-yellow diamond pattern. Today, the chair is pushed all the way into the dining room table. There are cracker crumbs on the seat and one of the legs is chipped.

Tuesday, 2/4: The chair is now leaning up against the counter. I wonder who put it there. Tiny flour handprints (my little sister's?) are around the back of the chair, and chocolate chips are on the seat. I guess someone was making cookies.

Wednesday, 2/5: The chair is back at the table. The handprints and the chocolate chips are gone, but now I notice sticky syrup down one of the legs. I go to sit in my chair and notice that it is warm. Who has been sitting in my chair?

Step 5: Once you have completed all of your observation diary entries, you will write a short paragraph that narrates sequentially what you observed over the last three days. Begin with the first day, then include the other observations you made about your object or creature.

Example: A brief paragraph, which narrates my observations

A Popular Chair

On Monday, I notice that my favorite dark brown wooden chair is pushed all the way into the dining room table and that it has cracker crumbs on its red-and-yellow diamond patterned seat. I never noticed that one of the legs has a large chip in it; I'd better ask my dad to fix it. On Tuesday, someone used my chair as a step stool. By the chocolate chips on the seat and the tiny flour handprints on the three slats across the back, I guess my little sister was helping Mom make cookies. I hope they saved a few for me! On Wednesday, my wonderful chair is back at the table and waiting for me. The flour and chocolate have been cleaned off, but unfortunately, now there's sticky syrup down one of the back legs. I clean it, then begin to sink down into my comfy seat. Wait! The seat is warm! Who has been sitting in my chair?

Narrative Writing—Lesson 5 Assignments

When typing your assignments in Word, please make sure to use **MLA format**. Also, when you e-mail me your assignments, please make sure that the subject line on your e-mail includes your name, the class name (NW), and the assignment number or numbers.

Example: Subject: BrianS NW-5A
 Or (if sending more than one)
 Subject: BrianS NW-5B and 5C (and so on)

When you are sending in your revisions, make sure to include that in the subject as well (rev1 or rev2 or whichever revision number it is).

Example: Subject: BrianS NW-5D rev2

NW5A: Book Journal Continue making entries in your book journal. **Reminder:** *Journal entries need to be made at least two (2) times a week using one of the techniques described in Lesson 1 (double-entry or problem-solution).* Your assignment is to type one of your book journal entries into a Word document. Please make sure to tell me what book you are reading by using it as the title for your assignment. Please name your assignment with your name and NW5A (and make sure to save it as a .doc or .docx). **Remember MLA format.** E-mail this assignment to me as an attachment.

NW5B: Writing A Friendly Letter Your assignment is to write a friendly letter to the person you interviewed. Your letter should thank the interviewee for the interview and let him or her know a couple things that you really enjoyed learning. Make sure you review the sections in this lesson on Writing a Friendly Letter and Addressing the Envelope before you begin this assignment. You may type your letter in Word or you may handwrite it on a nice piece of stationery. Once you have written your letter, you will need to address the envelope. Have one of your parents look over your letter and envelope before you mail it. **Once you are done and the letter is in the mail, have one of your parents e-mail me to let me know that you have completed this assignment.**

NW5C: Biographical Narrative—Writing the Story You will be completing your biographical narrative this week. To help you finish, please review “Writing Your Biographical Narrative, Step by Step” from Lesson 4. **Your assignment is to write any additional supporting paragraphs and to write your closing paragraph.** Please add these paragraphs to the document that contains your REVISED opening paragraph and your REVISED first supporting paragraph (assignment 4D). Type

your assignment in a Word document and name it with your name and **NW5C** (and make sure to save it as a .doc or .docx). **Remember MLA format.** E-mail this assignment to me as an attachment.

NW5D: Observation Paragraph Your assignment is to choose an object or creature to observe and then to keep an observation diary on this same object or creature for a period of three (3) days. You then will use your observation diary entries to write a brief paragraph that narrates your observations. Follow the steps in this lesson to guide you in completing this assignment. Type your assignment in a Word document and name it with your name and **NW5D** (and make sure to save it as a .doc or .docx). **Remember MLA format.** E-mail this assignment to me as an attachment.