



**Levels 1, 3,  
and 6**

# Friendly Notes and Letters

## Introduction

The friendly note or letter is an essential form that young students should master. The great thing about this genre is that it's *real*. When your child finishes his letter, be sure to teach him to address his envelope, stamp it, and mail it! There are many people who would love to get a letter from your child—grandparents, aunts and uncles, and friends who have moved away are all good candidates.

## Prewriting

The first thing you must do is to explain to your child who is new to letter writing that people have devised a format that they expect to see in a letter. While individuality and creativity are welcomed in many settings, this lesson is not one of them. You want to explain to your child that just as there is one right way to spell “school,” there is one right way to format a friendly letter.<sup>1</sup>

Here then is the format: note with students that it has five parts (listed on the left).

Header	14 Loon Lane
	Becket, P.A . 23400
	May 10, 2007
Greeting	Dear Grandma,
Body	How are you today? I am writing you a friendly letter for school. I am well, and so is Gracie. We are finishing up our school year soon. Our trees are all bursting out with flowers. I know you would like them because you love flowers. When will you come to see us again?
Closing Signature	Love,
	Joshua

If using a computer, use tabs to keep the header, closing, and signature lined up on their left margin.

## Notes:

- \* The header lines up (vertically) with the closing and signature.
  - The sender’s street address on the first line
  - His city, state, zip code on the second line
  - The date the letter is written goes on the third line
- \* The greeting goes on its own line, is not indented, and always has a comma following it.
- \* The body of the letter contains its information, and follows the normal rules of English. It can be one paragraph or many, and can extend over several sheets of paper.
- \* No matter how long the body is, the closing lines up, vertically, with the header. Like the greeting, it is always followed by a comma.
- \* The signature closes the letter. In a friendly letter, it can be just the student’s first name.

On page 2 are notes about the proper addressing of an envelope for your reference.

<sup>1</sup> Obviously, there is a caveat to this statement. In our ever-more-informal world this format matters less and less. Still, the lesson stands: this is the proper way to format a friendly letter.



Here is a properly addressed envelope:

Joshua Cherub 14 Loon Lane Becket, P.A . 23400	Stamp
Mrs. Emma Porter 1600 Sky View Court Coonville, S.C. 23456	

Be sure your student knows where commas go in both the return address and the destination address. Also, this is a good opportunity to talk about how we capitalize proper nouns and punctuate abbreviations of states.