

**LEARNING TO WRITE
TEXT:**

FRIENDLY LETTERS

BUSINESS LETTERS



B C KENNA RSM

THE AIMS OF THIS TEXT PROGRAMME

Today, formal letter writing seems to be a dying art. This writer has been frequently asked would she write a business letter for another, even though the person asking has completed successfully, with a high Tertiary Score, his/her Victorian Certificate of Education. Texting is in – friendly letter writing seems to be out! The wheel of time has a way of reversing trends or fads and many important parts of an English curriculum have been debunked at one time and returned twenty or so years later, because language learning has been all the poorer without them. I refer of course to phonics, grammar and spelling. Many business people are still asking their prospective employees to reply to job advertisements in writing.

The aims of this text study are to –

- Teach students to write friendly letters using a style where the writer describes his/her sensory experiences and events without constantly using the pronoun “I”**
- Provide students with information about topics that should never be written in such letters and why**
- Show examples of correctly written letters - friendly and business**
- Teach the formalities of line spacing in both types of letters**
- Provide students with information about addressing envelopes**
- Inform students that there are sites on the net where they can download videos showing them how to fold letters of different types**

No doubt some readers will be amused that this resource is included in modern-day educational programmes, but many young people are travelling overseas for employment and Asian, European and British business companies are very strict about the formalities of writing styles.

HOW TO WRITE A FRIENDLY LETTER

Friendly letters can be posted inside an envelope with a stamp attached, or you can write them on the computer and send them as an email, if your friend has an email receiver like a computer or an “I Pad.” Some mobile phones can send/receive emails.

There are some things you should avoid when writing to a friend. They are:

1. Writing about the weather
2. Writing a lot about yourself e.g. I did, I am, I can, I shall, etc. It is better to describe events and experiences, because weather and self are very **boring** topics!
3. Writing nasty things about another person e.g. John’s a creep! Mary yaps all the time. I hate him!

These unkind remarks could cause hurt to others and if Mary and John found out you wrote those things, you might get into trouble!

If you send your letter electronically, you do not need to add your address, because your email address will automatically be placed on your friend’s receiver, but if you are sending a letter by mail, then you must include all of these formal features –

1. Your house number and street name
2. The name of your town or city, then the postcode
3. The day, month and year you wrote your letter. Put them in numbers e.g. 23/2/12
4. A formal and friendly greeting – Dear Paul,
I hope you are well etc.
5. Express your information in a number of paragraphs
6. End your letter formally e.g. Your friend,
Yours truly,
Your mate
7. Then sign your name.

Here is a pretend letter. Mike, 15 years old is writing to his mate, Paul.

You can check the structure with the above facts written from numbers 1 to 7. If Mike were sending this letter by email, he would begin at “Dear Paul.”

123 Rose St.
Wendouree, 3350
22/2/12

(Leave one line space empty)

Dear Paul,

(Leave one line space empty)

I hope you are having a really good time in Bendigo by visiting all the tourist places, like the old gold mine. When we went to Sovereign Hill in Ballarat last year, it was good fun. Zac and I found some gold pieces in the creek when we were panning, but unfortunately it turned out to be “fools gold” – not gold at all!

(Leave an empty line between paragraphs.)

The shops were great! Ladies and men who worked in the village were dressed in the 19th century clothes. The women wore really long dresses and funny hats called bonnets that tied under their chins. They had long sleeves on their dresses and must have felt pretty hot. The men had skinny trouser legs, shirts with no collars and tall hats. They all seemed to wear boots. The lolly shop had toffee lollies that were very hard and some jelly sweets. I didn't like them much, but the baker shop had yummy bread and cakes. You can buy a cup of tea or coffee and the ladies serve it in silver pots and cups and saucers – not mugs. Zac couldn't get his big pointer finger through the handle of the cup and spilt his tea on the white table cloth and floor.

In the clothes shop you can pay money to dress up in period costume and there's an old fashioned camera shop where you can get your photo taken. The camera is under a black cloth and the photographer has to put his head under that cloth at the back to take the photo. He holds up a rod with a globe on it and it flashes when your photo is taken.

The underground tunnel is the best. It has hardly any lighting and is meant to look like it was when the diggers were mining. There are dummies with picks and other tools they used. It's a bit scary for little kids.

The blacksmith made a horse-shoe for one of the old draught-horses while we were watching. I loved the sizzling of the red, hot, iron shoe when he threw it into the tank of water to cool it. The horse didn't seem to feel any pain when the nails were hammered into its hoof. It just stood quietly. The blacksmith had lots of things for sale like pokers and fire-tongs for open fires.

Some kids from the Ballarat schools go to Sovereign Hill for about a week, dress up in period costumes and attend the small school. They learn old lessons

like writing in copy-books and tables. If they get caught talking, they have to stand or sit in the corner, facing the wall for punishment. The teacher has a bamboo cane – a thin, springy stick, with which he threatens to hit the kids if they are naughty. He pounces around and bangs the table with the cane and does a lot of yelling. Outside the kids play marbles and old fashioned games in the playground. They get beautiful food, lollies and cakes for free while they are there.

Let me know when you come home and we can go for a bike hike or to the pool if it's hot. See ya!

Your mate,

Mike

You show respect for your friend if you write your letter correctly, paying attention to neatness and tidiness also grammar, correct spelling and punctuation. Those skills are important because if they are absent, you cannot get your meaning across clearly. This doesn't mean you cannot use slang or colloquialisms like "See Ya!"

What should **not** be written in a friendly letter was referred to above. We now have the ways and means to communicate **instantly** through email and we might be tempted to send an angry letter or message to someone we think has offended us. This is not a good idea, because we may have been given wrong information. It is better to **talk** to that person when we get over our anger and sort out our difficulties. Be very careful when writing, because the printed word is so permanent. A written message can be held against you forever. Your written words can be used against you in a courtroom! The sender can have no way of knowing who will read his/her letter.

Business Letters

Business letters are written for many purposes. Some provide information from big firms and companies. An example of this might be – telling a person who has applied for a job that s/he has been accepted as an employee, or that person is invited to come to the employer for an interview regarding a possible job. Many employment officers today ask people in their advertisement to **reply to them in writing**. They provide the name and address of the interviewer in the advertisement. This is done for a purpose. The employer wants an intelligent, well educated person for the position advertised.

The letter to the employer or his/her officer must be formally typed or carefully handwritten. Here is a pretend letter by a lady who is **typing** a letter to a business manager after she has read the advertisement in the local newspaper. If the letter is handwritten, there is no need to leave all the empty line spaces – one line space will do.

321 Daisy St.
North Ballarat, 3350
Vic.
28/2/12

(Leave four line spaces)

(The business person, his/her address to whom the letter is being sent)

The Manager,
Comfort Shoe Store
16 Line St.
Ballarat, 3350

(Leave four line spaces)

Dear Mr Green,

(Leave one line space.)

I saw your advertisement for a shop assistant in the Ballarat Courier newspaper on February 25th. I am replying to your request, as I am interested in applying for that position.

Previously, I have worked as a shop assistant in two different businesses. I have also had experience in other types of employment and I have a resume that contains my previous employment information. I will bring it to an interview if you will grant me that privilege. I can also suggest three people who are prepared to act as referees on my behalf. My mobile phone number is – 04 1234 5678. This phone will be switched on each weekday throughout business hours. My home phone number is – 03 5365 4321.

Yours faithfully,

(Leave four line spaces)

(Handwrite your signature here)

Jane Smith *(If your letter is typed, then type signature here)*

A business letter may be handwritten or typed. It must be formally set out, written in correct English, with correct spelling and punctuation. Of course it must be neat and tidy, folded correctly into an envelope and addressed as stated in the newspaper. Provide no more information than is requested.

Unlike friendly letters, this communication is about you; therefore you may refer to yourself as “I” on more than one occasion.

FOLDING A LETTER

There are videos available on the net, which will show you how to fold letters. Simply write in your search box – “Find video that helps me to fold letters.” A menu will be displayed and you will be able to find what you want.

HOW TO ADDRESS ENVELOPES FOR THESE LETTERS

Mike’s letter to Paul –

Paul Brown
Manager’s Office
C/o Goldbar Caravan Park
111 Riverview Rd.
Bendigo
Vic.

3360

Mr J Green
The Manager
Comfort Shoe Store
16 Line St.
Ballarat, Vic.

3350

On the back of each envelope you need to write the word –

Sender –

Put your name, followed by address here, as it is at the top of your letter.

Do not forget to put a stamp on the letter in the top right hand corner of the envelope.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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