

Writing a Personal Letter

2nd-3rd grades

Overview

In this build series, students will explore ways to communicate with someone who is important to them. They will talk about something they would like to share with a friend or family member in a letter, make personal connections to that person to help them think of content for the letter, anticipate that person's reaction to the letter, and consider other ways of communicating with someone they care about.

Connect to Curriculum

This build series can be part of classroom activities that involve:

Writing:

- Composing narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events, using descriptive details.
- Recalling information from experience or gathering information from print and digital sources.

Language:

- Using knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, and listening.
- Demonstrating understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Before You Begin

Assess and encourage prior learning by:

- Introducing and defining key vocabulary: *audience, familiar, letter* and *unfamiliar*.
- Discussing the difference between writing to someone you know, such as friends and family, and someone you don't know, such as a new pen pal.
- Reading and discussing different types of letters written by other people. It is a good idea to review basic writing conventions for letter writing.

Build and Share

Have students build and share their models by following the steps outlined in the Challenge Cards provided with this activity.



Tip:

Consult the Quick Start Guide of this activity pack for ideas on classroom management and organization.



Vocabulary:

- **audience:** the persons addressed by letter or other communication
- **familiar:** commonly or generally known or seen
- **letter:** a written communication addressed to a person, usually transmitted by mail
- **unfamiliar:** not familiar; different, unusual, or strange

Reflect on the Experience

Encourage students to record and reflect on their models and ideas.

Extensions

After completing the build series, encourage further learning by:

- Writing a letter to someone you've never met before. (Language Arts)
- Having students read letters they have written aloud, and having other students pretend to be the recipient of the letters and respond. (Language Arts)
- Having one student listen to a letter that another student has written and retell what they've heard using pictures or words. (Language Arts, Visual Arts)
- Organizing ongoing pen pal relationships with students or individuals from another class or school or within the community, such as a local seniors' group. (Language Arts)

Facilitating Questions:

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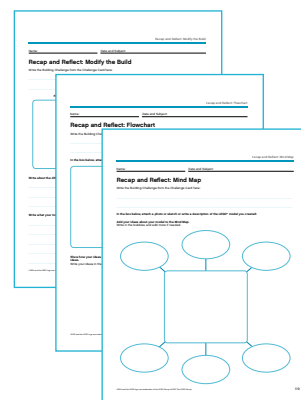
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Notes:

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Tip:

Use one of the Recap and Reflect Worksheets available in the Support Materials section of this activity pack to document the build experience.



Topic: Writing a Personal Letter

1 Think about



These four building tasks will help you express your thoughts and ideas about writing a personal letter.

Build: Build a model that shows something you would like to tell a friend or family member in a letter.

Building Time: 3-4 minutes

Share: When the building time is up, take turns telling each other about what you have built.

Keep your model on your own building plate.



Language Arts, Writing a Personal Letter, 2nd-3rd grades

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Topic: Writing a Personal Letter

2 Remember



Now that you've thought about a specific example of a letter you could write, it is useful to think about why you might want to write it.

Build: Build a model that shows why this friend or family member is important to you and why you would like to write them a letter.

Building Time: 3-4 minutes

Share: When the building time is up, take turns telling each other about what you have built.

Keep your model on your own building plate.



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3 Imagine



Now you will use your imagination and creativity to think about the person to whom you are writing a letter and what will happen when the letter is received.

Build: Build a model that shows how you think your friend or family member will feel when they read your letter.

Building Time: 3-4 minutes

Share: When the building time is up, take turns telling each other about what you have built.

Keep your model on your own building plate.



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4 Conclude



Now you will build a model that sums up what you have learned so far.

Build: Build a model that shows another way you could tell a friend or family member what is happening in your life.

Building Time: 3-4 minutes

Share: When the building time is up, take turns telling each other about what you have built.

Keep your model on your own building plate.



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