

Australia Post – Persuasive Letter Writing (Year Three – Year Four)

Lesson overview

Australia Post understands how important it is to contribute to your local community. Writing a letter is an effective way for students to voice their opinion on issues that matter to them. In this lesson students will identify an issue in their school or local area, brainstorm ideas and start to create a plan for this issue to be resolved. Students will write a persuasive letter to their Principal or local Member of Parliament about the problem identified and the action they think needs to be taken.

Learning intention

Students will:

- Discuss and understand the importance of contributing and doing your part in the community.
- Understand the [structure of a letter](#) including name and address, date, greeting, body, farewell, signature and postscript.
- Understand the concept of persuasion
- Identify persuasive techniques in letter writing.
- [Compose a persuasive letter](#) to the Principal or local Member of Parliament.

Resources

- Interactive whiteboard
- <http://auspost.com.au/education/letterwriting>
- devices for internet research
- collaboration software for brainstorming ideas in groups or large sheets of paper
- copies of recent local newspapers

Assessment

Formative (Assessment for Learning):

- Monitoring understanding throughout class discussion and questioning.
- Collecting copies of letters as work samples.
- Student self-assessment
- Peer Assessment
- Teacher feedback
- Response from Principal or local Member of Parliament

Differentiation

Structured: Use small group instruction to help support students while composing their letter.

Core: Students are given the option to work individually, in pairs or in small groups.

Extension: Students develop their plan of action and seek permission from the Principal to put their plan into place.

Australian Curriculum Links

Year Three - English

Language:

- Understand how different types of texts vary in use of language choices, depending on their purpose and context (for example, tense and types of sentences) **(ACELA1478)**
- Learn extended and technical vocabulary and ways of expressing opinion including modal verbs and adverbs **(ACELA1484)**

Literacy:

- Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations **(ACELY1676)**
- Identify the audience and purpose of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts **(ACELY1678)**
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features and selecting print, and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose **(ACELY1682)**

Year Four - English

Language:

- Understand how texts vary in complexity and technicality depending on the approach to the topic, the purpose and the intended audience **(ACELA1490)**
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Literacy:

- Use interaction skills such as acknowledging another’s point of view and linking students’ response to the topic, using familiar and new vocabulary and a range of vocal effects such as tone, pace, pitch and volume to speak clearly and coherently **(ACELY1688)**
- Identify characteristic features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text **(ACELY1690)**
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts containing key information and supporting details for a widening range of audiences, demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features **(ACELY1694)**

General Capabilities	
Literacy	Personal and Social Capability
Critical and Creative Thinking	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Capability
Intercultural Understanding	

Lesson introduction	5 mins
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1. Begin the lesson by explaining that everyone has an important role to play in their local community. Ask students, ‘Why do you think it is important to contribute to the community and in what ways can this be done?’ Write down students answers on the board and give them time to discuss and listen to opinions.
2. Explain to the students that they are going to be working to identify an issue or problem in their school or local community. They will brainstorm ideas and start to work on a plan to solve or improve the issue identified.

Main body of teaching	45 mins
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3. In order to identify the issue or problem they would like to work on solving, students are given copies of local newspaper and access to the internet to research happenings in the local community. If students have no access to devices, this research could be done as a whole class on the interactive whiteboard. Suggestions could be made such as:
 - The school playground needs new equipment
 - There is lots of rubbish in the school/streets
 - The local soccer nets need replacing
 - A community event for kids is needed for Harmony Day or another special day.
4. After students complete their research, come back as a whole class to share and discuss the issues identified. Give students the option to work individually, in pairs or in groups of 3 or 4 to come up with a plan or ideas on how the problem could be solved. It may be that students have identified the same issue or problem and would like to work together, or they may find it interesting to work separately and compare each other's approach to solving the problem.
5. After students have brainstormed their ideas they are then to write a letter to their Principal if it is a school issue or their local Member of Parliament if it is a community issue. Show students an example of a letter written to a Member of Parliament.
Read through the letter as a class and identify the correct structure of a business letter and the use of persuasive devices in the letter. Discuss other persuasive devices and techniques that can be included in their letter.
6. Students then write their own letter following the structure of a business letter and including the ideas they have come up with for solutions to their identified problem. You might choose to have students write their own letter or work in their groups to collaborate and write the letter together. Students may refer to 'Writing a Business Letter' to support them with the structure of the letter.
7. Students then review and edit their letter with teacher and/or peer feedback. Once students have finished their letters offer the opportunity for students to read their letter out loud to the class.

Plenary**10 mins**

8. Once the letters have been reviewed by the teacher, students can post their letters after correctly addressing an envelope to the Principal or their local Member of Parliament. Refer [here](#) on how to address an envelope. (This may need to be completed in a following lesson.)
9. Review with the students what they have learnt in the lesson and give them the opportunity to evaluate and give feedback. You might ask students to self-evaluate using a rating scale on the following statements:
 - I understand the importance of contributing to community.
 - I used appropriate persuasive techniques when writing my business letter.
 - I would like more help when writing a business letter.
 - I will continue to work on resolving the issue I/my group have/has identified.