

# Adjectives

Year 1



## Lesson overview

This lesson consists of three activities exploring letter writing conventions and culminating in students writing a letter to their own pen pal. Schools may wish to set up a pen pal system with students at another school in Australia or encourage the students to choose their own pen pal. Register for **The Pen Pal Club** at [auspost.com.au/penpalclub](https://auspost.com.au/penpalclub) to assist you in arranging pen pals for your students.

The activities throughout this lesson will use the book *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan as a stimulus for writing letters to pen pals and exploring features of writing, from the very basic to the more complex. This lesson will primarily focus on the Literacy strand of the English curriculum however students will also explore aspects of the Language and Literature strands. Year 1 students will be exploring how adjectives are used to improve narrative. They will identify adjectives and descriptive sentences in *The Pen Pal Club* and then generate their own descriptive sentences by using adjectives. Students will then write a letter to their chosen pen pal including adjectives and descriptive sentences to show their learning.

Teachers may choose to organise an excursion to the local Post Office for students to post their letters at the end of these activities. This is a great opportunity for students to ask questions and expand their knowledge about the Australian postal system. Email [penpalclub@auspost.com.au](mailto:penpalclub@auspost.com.au) to arrange a tour of your local Post Office.

## Learning intentions

Students will understand:

- How to use detail and description to add interest to their writing
- When and why we use adjectives
- How to describe something by using our senses
- How to format an informal letter

## Resources

- *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Supplementary interactive whiteboard (IWB) resources

For schools that do not have access to an IWB, please note that the resources can be downloaded or accessed on personal devices or used as a reference if teachers prefer to provide their own resources.

## Assessment

- Group discussions
- Group work (supervised)
- Self assessment activities
- Peer assessment activities
- Summative tasks (addressed envelope and letter)

## Australian Curriculum links

### Year 1 - English Outcomes

- Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (**ACELY1655**)
- Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams (**ACELY1661**)
- Re-read student's own texts and discuss possible changes to improve meaning, spelling and punctuation (**ACELY1662**)
- Write using unjoined lower case and upper case letters (**ACELY1663**)

## Differentiation

As with all our lessons teachers are encouraged to change or update the activities in order to cater to diverse student needs.

The activities in this unit have been differentiated for three ability levels (support, core and extension) with differing levels of support.

## General capabilities

-  Literacy
-  Critical and Creative Thinking
-  Personal and Social Capability
-  Intercultural Understanding

## Cross curriculum priorities

-  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures (depending on school context)

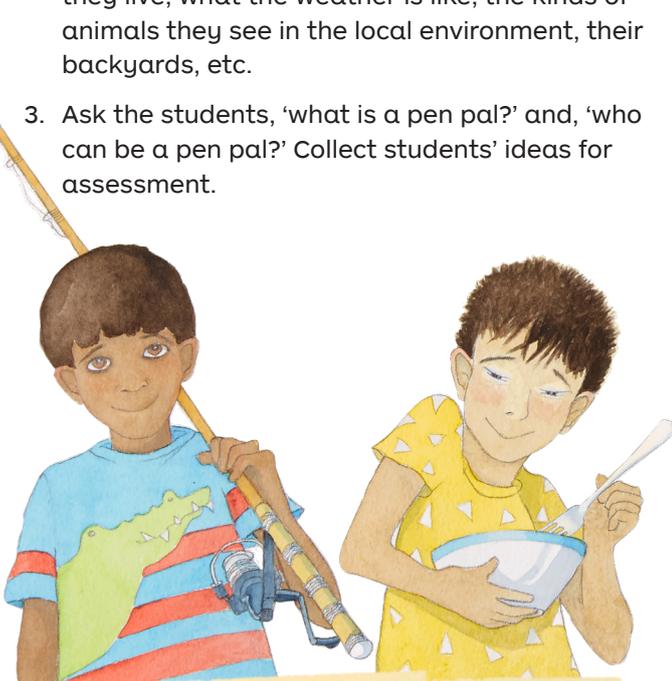
## Introduction

1. Gather the class as a group and read the book *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan.
2. Discuss the characters involved in the story and relate to the students' own experiences, i.e. where they live, what the weather is like, the kinds of animals they see in the local environment, their backyards, etc.
3. Ask the students, 'what is a pen pal?' and, 'who can be a pen pal?' Collect students' ideas for assessment.

## Activity 1

### Introduction

1. Explain to the class that students will be exploring features of a descriptive sentence in this activity, in preparation for writing a descriptive letter at the end of the lesson.
2. Ask the students, 'What do sentences need?' Collect their ideas on the board.
3. Brainstorm ways in which students can make their sentences more interesting and engaging for the reader.
4. Display the following two sentences:
  - The cat sat.
  - Simon's fluffy, ginger feline curled on the worn rug as he settled down next to the roaring fire as the snow swirled outside.
5. Ask the students which sentence is more interesting to read (hopefully they will choose the second sentence!).
6. Highlight the use of extra information and explain that people are interested by extra details and description.



## Main body

1. Display the following sentence on the board; The camel walked.
2. Explain that this is a shared writing exercise where we will use our ideas to make this boring sentence as interesting as we can.
3. Encourage the students to think about the following questions in relation to the sentence; Where? When? How? What? Why? Who? i.e. Where was the camel walking? In a zoo? On top of a hill? Stomping across the scorching desert plains?
4. Use the students' ideas to flesh out the sentence until it is beautifully detailed and interesting. Point out the different details you have added and how the students now respond to it.
5. Also point out the use of capital letters and full stops.
6. If needed, repeat the exercise with other sentences for the students to improve as a class. You may use your own or use the following;
  - Tim used the black pen.
  - The postie came.
  - We played.
7. Explain that the students will now try to complete this activity independently at their tables. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.
  - **Support** - Students work with an adult to improve another sentence by adding details in response to structured questions on the *Adding Detail* activity sheet. The adult may scribe the students' ideas if needed.
  - **Core** - Students work in pairs to improve a single sentence by adding details in response to structured questions on the *Adding Detail 2* activity sheet. Students should write out their finished sentence, remembering to ensure their sentence has a capital letter at the start (and for any proper nouns) and a full stop at the end.
  - **Extension** - Students choose a sentence from a selection and work independently to improve it by adding more detail in response to the questions explored in the shared writing activity. Students should write out their finished sentence, ensuring they have correct punctuation.

8. When students have completed this activity, they will need to assess their work. Working with a partner, students should use the *Assess My Writing* activity sheet to check that their partner has included a full stop at the end of their sentence, a capital letter at the beginning and some interesting details. Support-level 1 students can complete this activity in their group.
9. Students could rewrite their sentences with correct punctuation and more detail if necessary. Teachers should ensure there is adequate time provided for this.

## Plenary

1. Regroup as a whole class. Ask students to share some of the sentences they have written.
2. Praise the diverse range of detail the students have produced, perhaps displaying some of their finished sentences around the room as examples of interesting sentence writing.
3. Potential homework activity: Challenge the class to make the sentence 'I ran' as exciting as possible by thinking about the question words explored in the main body of the activity.

## Activity 2

### Introduction

1. Gather the class as a group and recap their knowledge on how to make our writing interesting. Refer back to students' ideas from the previous session.
2. Introduce adjectives (describing words). Writers use adjectives to describe their nouns. Using some of the sentences students created last session (or for homework) point out where students have used adjectives.
3. Link adjectives to our senses: explain that we describe things by considering what it looks/ smells/ feels/ tastes/ sounds like.
4. Go through *The Pen Pal Club* to find adjectives and sort them into the senses; i.e. "shiny gold nuggets", "white sandy beach".
5. Challenge students to fill in the other senses for the noun phrases you find, i.e. what would camels smell like? What does sand feel like in your mouth? What sounds do you hear at the beach?

## Main body

1. Explain that students will be exploring adjectives through their imagination today.
2. Display an image of a landscape or particular scene on the board; i.e. a jungle, a busy city street, a beach at sunset, etc.
3. Hand out the *5 Senses* activity sheet to the students.
4. Explain that the students will now try to complete an adjective activity independently at their tables. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.
  - **Support** - Students work with an adult to provide adjectives for each of the senses on their *5 Senses* activity sheet to describe the scene on the board. The adult can scribe the students' ideas. The group should create a descriptive sentence about the scene, or several sentences for each sense. The adult should encourage the students to check the final sentence(s) for capital letters and full stops.
  - **Core** - Students work in pairs to describe the scene on the board using the *5 Senses* activity sheet. They should each write a descriptive sentence in their writing books and check for capital letters and full stops.
  - **Extension** - Students work independently to write two sentences to describe the scene on the board using the *5 Senses* activity sheet. Students should endeavour to include correct grammar for each sentence.
5. When students have completed this activity, hand out the *Self Check* assessment sheets to each student. Encourage them to check their work for capital letters at the start of each sentence, a full stop at the end of each sentence and adjectives.

## Plenary

1. Bring the class together as a group and review what students have learned about adjectives.
2. Encourage students to share the sentences they have written and celebrate their descriptive efforts.
3. Teachers may choose to collect a list of adjectives students have used and use it as a display tool in the classroom.



## Activity 3 Introduction

1. Gather the class as a group and refer to the letters in the book *The Pen Pal Club* by Sally Morgan.
2. Discuss how the letters are structured. Highlight the greeting, main text and sign off. Display the letter writing template on the board for students to refer to throughout the lesson.
3. Ask students, 'who are you writing your letter to?' and 'where will your letter have to go?' Discuss with the students how the postal service will know where to deliver your letter. Establish an understanding that all letters need an address.
4. Write the school address on the board and identify each section, i.e. street number, street name, suburb, state and postcode.
5. As an extension activity, teachers may choose to use Google Earth or Maps to demonstrate to students how addresses are built.
6. Explain that students will need to find their pen pal's address before they send their letter.

## Main body

1. Explain that the students will now try to draft their letters to their pen pals independently at their tables.
2. Remind students of the features they need to include in their work to make it an interesting and well-written letter, i.e. capital letters, full stops and adjectives.
3. Three differentiated activities have been provided below. Teachers are encouraged to select the most appropriate activity according to student ability, or provide another, more appropriate activity.
  - **Support** - Students sit in a small group with an adult. They use the *Letter Template* activity sheet to draft a letter consisting of one or two sentences to their pen pal. On the back they may choose to illustrate their letter with a picture like Jack or Ruby in *The Pen Pal Club*.
  - **Core** - Students work independently to draft a letter to their pen pal in the *Letter Template* activity sheet. Their letter should consist of at least three sentences, containing adjectives, separated by full stops. On the back they may choose to illustrate their letter with a picture like Jack or Ruby in *The Pen Pal Club*.
  - **Extension** - Students work independently in their writing books or on paper to draft out their letter to their pen pal, using the template on the board as a guide. Their letters should consist of at least four sentences, containing adjectives, separated by full stops. Once they have finished, students may choose to draw a picture for their pen pal to describe something they wrote about in the letter.

During this activity, teachers should play the role of facilitator, assessing and filling gaps in students' learning by observing work, answering questions and providing guidance where necessary.

## Plenary

1. Using the *Self Check* assessment sheet, students should aim to check their writing for capital letters, full stops and adjectives.
2. Teachers may choose to provide a further opportunity for students to produce a final draft of their letter.
3. Support the students in putting their letters into envelopes and applying a stamp. Their homework will be to address the envelope and post it!

Teacher Note: Register for **The Pen Pal Club** at [auspost.com.au/penpalclub](https://auspost.com.au/penpalclub) to assist you in arranging pen pals for your students.

## Going further

1. Encourage students to think of some questions they would like to ask a postie.
2. Brainstorm with students what they think happens to letters when we post them.
3. Discuss writing a letter to a person in another country; what considerations would you have to make?
4. Think about where we might buy stamps.
5. How much do stamps cost? Look at the different prices and compare to link this idea to numeracy.



# Adding Detail

Shared writing activity

Where? .....

When? .....

How? .....

What? .....

Why? .....

Who? .....

# Adding Detail

Fill in the extra details and then write out your own interesting sentence below.

Where? .....

When? .....

How? .....

What? .....

Why? .....

Who? .....

.....

.....

# Assess my writing!



Read your partner's writing and draw a smiley face if they have included the following

Capital letter at the  
start of every sentence

Full stop at the end  
of every sentence

Some interesting  
details

# 5 Senses

Describe the scene by using your senses!

What does it look like? What can you see?	What does it sound like? What can you hear?	What does it feel like? What can you touch?	What can you smell?	What can you taste?

# Self check!

Draw a smiley face if your writing has:

Capital letter at the  
start of every sentence

Full stop at the end  
of every sentence

Some interesting  
details

# Letter template

Dear .....

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From,

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# The Pen Pal Club

Year 1



Sentence 1

The cat sat.



## Sentence 2

Simon's fluffy, ginger feline curled on the worn rug as he settled down next to the roaring fire with the snow swirling outside.



Sentence 3

The tree grew.



# Letter template

Dear .....

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.....  
.....

From,  
.....

## Letter Template

- Greeting - Who are you writing to?
- Main letter - What will you write about?
- Sign off - your name