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Writing a Letter

Maybe it's not as fast as e-mail or a text message, but a letter is a gift that comes in an envelope. A letter is a compliment. It means that the sender was thinking of you and only you for the time it took to write it. No wonder people save their letters. Who would throw away a compliment?

When you write a letter,
remember to:

- Sound like yourself.
- Tell the person why you are writing.
- Use specific details.
- Be polite.
- Express yourself clearly.



Writing to Newspapers and Magazines

Is something going on in the news that has you thinking? Is there a current event in your school or in your town that makes you want to shout? You can shout and maybe even be published! Writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine lets the publishers know that real people are reading and thinking about their writing.

Writing Tips

- Have a formal manner; this is not a friendly letter.
- State your position clearly and support it with your reasons.
- Never, ever insult an editor.
- Keep it short—not longer than one page.
- Make sure your letter is proofread properly before you send it.



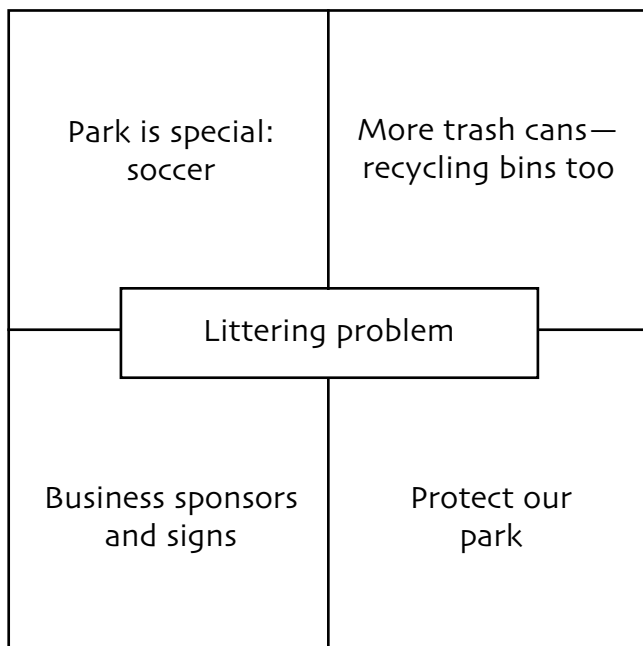
Your envelope must be addressed properly or the post office won't deliver your letter!
Don't forget your return address—and a stamp!

Your Name Your Street Your City, State, Zip Code	Place your stamp here!
First Name and Last Name Street Address City, State, Zip Code	

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Shorter is better when it comes to a letter to the editor! Before you write, it is a good idea to know exactly what you want to say, and then stick to it. One main idea will be more than enough for your letter. Planning is the best way to write short and powerful letters.

Try a Four Square for a planning tool.



November 28, 2006
To the Editor of the Burkeville Times:
As a student at Burkeville Elementary, I am very concerned about the littering problem in Martin Park. This park is a very special place to me and my friends. We have played soccer there since I was little. I think that more trash cans would help people to keep the park clean. People would even recycle if bins were there for our cans and bottles. Maybe there are some businesses in town who can donate these trash cans. Then we could put a sign on the can, and everyone would want to shop at those stores. I definitely believe we need to do everything we can to protect our park.
Sincerely,
Your Name

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Writing to Assisted-Living Residences

Write a letter to someone to give them a smile. This letter will go to someone who is living in a home apart from their family, so your friendly words will warm someone's heart. Ask a parent or a teacher for the address of an assisted-living residence near you.

Writing Tips

- Sound like yourself.
- Don't ask personal questions.
- Tell about yourself (but don't tell anything your family wouldn't want you to share).
- Include something special like a drawing, poem or joke.
- Write neatly! Spell well.



Writing to Authors

We love their books and we want to know more about them and how they do their writing. Many authors will respond to kids' writing. (A great book to read is Beverly Cleary's *Dear Mr. Henshaw*) Find an author's address on the title page in care of the publisher. Check publisher's Web sites. They often have links. Or ask a teacher or parent to help you find the address.

Writing Tips

- Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want a reply.
- Any questions you ask should be relevant to the author's writing.
- Keep your letter to one page.
- The tone should be friendly and polite.

