

“Pen Pal Letters”

Lesson Plan by: Liz Myers

Lesson: learning to write a letter

Length: 30 minutes

Age or Grade Intended: 3rd Grade

Academic Standards: English/Language Arts

3.5.3 Write personal, persuasive, and formal letters, thank-you notes, and invitations that:

- show awareness of the knowledge and interests of the audience
- establish a purpose and context
- include the date, proper salutation, body, closing, and signature.

Performance Objectives: The students will write a letter about their climate and physical characteristics using all parts of a letter correctly and obtaining a 80% on the established rubric.

Advanced Preparation by Teacher: Write a sample letter from a student in Hawaii.

Assessment: The teacher will assess the students through observation during the discussion and during the student’s writing time. The teacher will also assess the students’ letters using the rubric.

Procedure:

Introduction/Motivation: “How many of you have ever received a written letter in the mail or have seen a letter in the mail? Well, I have received a letter from a student in Hawaii who has been studying different climates and physical environments just like we have. (Place letter on overhead and read the letter) I was thinking that since we have been studying climates and environments, we could write letters to this student to help her out.

Step-by-Step Plan:

1. Explain that letters have a specific format to follow just like the letter on the overhead. By looking at the letter, have the students try to tell you the different parts of a letter. (Analysis) Draw an example letter on the chalkboard filling in all the parts as you discuss them. (Visual/Spatial)
2. Include and explain why we have all the parts to a letter (date, greeting, body, salutation, and the signature).
3. “Now that you know how to write a letter, we are all going to write a letter back to the student from Hawaii.” (Linguistic) (Intrapersonal)
4. Explain that in the body they will write three paragraphs. It will be an introduction, main body, and a conclusion.

5. Introduction: Introduce yourself and describe where you are from and what you like to do.
6. Main body: Answer all the questions the student had in her letter. Describe our climate (remembering the characteristics of climate; temperature, wind, precipitation, and location). Describe our physical environment. What is our land like and what do you enjoy doing outdoors?
7. Conclusion: Ask the student about her climate. What do you want to know about Hawaii?

Closure: Discuss with the students what they wrote in their letters. Have them explain why they wrote what they did. (Knowledge) Are there things in their climate or physical environment that are different from Hawaii's? (Comprehension) Why are climates in different places different from ours? (Knowledge)

Adaptations/Enrichment: For the students with a learning disability, modify their letter requirements. Give them a paper that has the different parts of a letter already labeled and have them write their letter on that paper. For students with a visual disability, have them type their letters on a computer that has Braille lettering.

Self-Reflection:

- Were they able to label all parts of their letter correctly?
- Are the students recognizing differences in climates of another place?
- Is there a more engaging way to teach the students how to write a letter?