

Dear Educators,

February 2023

LET'S GET STUDENTS WRITING

with letter activities!

Encouraging students to write letters from an early age, as early as Pre-K or Kindergarten, can improve their communication, social and handwriting skills, and teach them what they need to know about writing and structuring letters. These letter writing activities are aimed at helping students strengthen their letter writing skills, whether they are "writing" digitally or a traditional pen and paper means. By providing a variety of different activities, students will recognize that writing a letter can fulfill a number of purposes including communicating ideas, sharing opinions, persuading others and expressing feelings.

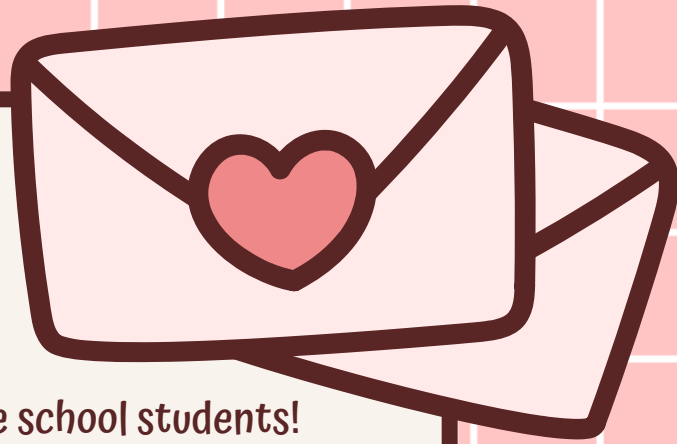


EMMA FOLEY



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Secret Buddies



Suitable for elementary or middle school students!

After students have seen various examples of letters and have discussed the essential parts of a letter, this is an opportunity for students to begin writing their own letters to an authentic audience (i.e. a classmate).

In this activity, students will write a letter/letters to their "secret buddy" classmate. Students should use the opportunity to highlight their classmates' learning efforts and dedication through positive comments and words of encouragement in the form of a letter.

This is a great way for students to give each other "lifts and nudges" which just might be internalized more than if it was coming from the mouth of the teacher!

When students are writing these letters to their classmate, they should still be including all of the required parts of a letter, including a salutation and ending with an appropriate closing. Each student should address their "secret buddy" by name in the letter; however, they should conceal their own identity in the letter to preserve their anonymity.



FRIENDLY LETTER SCAVENGER HUNT

Aimed towards students in the primary and elementary grades!

In this activity, students are going on a "friendly letter scavenger hunt" where their mission is to search and locate the essential parts in their assigned letters. As they locate the essential parts of the letter they should mark each part with a post-it note. As they are labeling, students should use the correct vocabulary terms taught in a mini lesson on the parts to a personal letter (i.e. taught whole-group style using an anchor chart).



Operation Gratitude

Suitable for all grade levels - K to 12!

Students may not already know but there are many programs (involving students) where letter writing is needed and appreciated.

One of the most popular national programs out there is Operation Gratitude, in which students can strengthen their letter writing skills by writing letters to military personnel and first responders.

Operation Gratitude doesn't require a *minimum* of letters so for this activity, you can either have students write a single class letter or individually write letters to a group of Operation Gratitude recipients. If students are writing individual letters, once all students have written their letter, the teacher will be the one responsible for gathering all the letters, sending them off to O.G. in one large envelope and O.G. will handle the rest, getting them to their intended recipient.

