

Language Arts 8

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Getting to Know You: Letter of Introduction

Welcome back to STM. As your grade eight year begins, I would like you to help me get to know you by sharing some information about yourself with me in a letter of Introduction.

One year has passed since you began your journey here at STM and many interesting things have occurred within that time span. You are to write a friendly letter about yourself. Your letter should include an introduction of yourself, a description of your interests, an explanation of your likes and dislikes, and comments about what you aim to accomplish this year and beyond.

Before you begin writing, think about your answers (brainstorm), begin to organize your ideas into paragraphs, and then start to write your rough copy. Do keep in mind the format of the friendly letter as well. To review, here are some suggestions to help you get started:

- ✓ Describe yourself and your family
- ✓ Share some things you enjoy doing in your spare time
- ✓ Share information about your likes and dislikes
- ✓ Talk about any volunteering that you may do
- ✓ Share an interesting summer vacation story
- ✓ Discuss what you hope to accomplish during your grade eight year.

I look forward to getting to know each of you. Do the best you can, ask for help if you require it and remember to correctly communicate your ideas in paragraphs within the structure of the friendly letter.

Friendly Letter Purpose

There are many different reasons to write a friendly letter. A friendly letter is a way of communicating between two people who are usually well acquainted. There are many uses and reasons for writing a friendly letter, but usually friendly letters will consist of topics on a personal level. People may write friendly letters for the following purposes: to catch up on what is new in their lives, to invite someone over for a party, to apologize, etc... Friendly letters can either be printed or hand-written.

Friendly Letter Format

The friendly letter is typically less formal than a business letter. Usually the first paragraph of the body will consist of an introduction which will give the recipient an idea about why you're writing to them with a short summary of the main topic of your letter. If you don't know the person you are writing to, you may want to introduce yourself in this introductory paragraph as well. In most cases, people writing friendly letters know the person to whom they are writing.

The next few paragraphs will usually consist of the message you want to get across along with any details you may want to convey. Each paragraph should contain a new idea. These ideas must be fully developed before the writer moves on to the next paragraph. Be sure to include sufficient details.

The last paragraph is the conclusion where you wrap everything up. You can sum up your main idea in this paragraph, thank the recipient for their time, and wish the recipient well. Try not to ask any questions or start any new ideas in this paragraph.

Since friendly letters are less formal, your word choice may also be less formal. This means that you may use contractions and some slang language, etc... However, standardized spelling as well as proper punctuation and grammar are still a must.

In the friendly letter format, your address, date, the closing, signature, and printed name are all lined up on the left half of the page (Make sure the heading and closing are lined up, use your own discretion and make sure it looks presentable). Also the first line of each paragraph is indented.

1. Your Address: (Not needed if the letter is printed on paper with a letterhead already on it.): All that is needed is your street address on the first line and the city, province and postal code on the second line.

2. Date: Put the date on which the letter was written in the format: Month Day Year i.e. August 31, 1975. Skip a line between the date and the salutation.

3. Salutation: This starts out with Dear so and so. Note: There is a comma after the end of the salutation.

4. Body: The body is where you write the content of the letter; the paragraphs should be single spaced with a skipped line between each paragraph. Skip 2 lines between the end of the body and the closing.

5. Closing: This lets the reader know that you are finished with your letter; it usually ends with Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Thank you, and so on. Note that there is a comma after the end of the closing and only the first word in the closing is capitalized.

6. Signature: Your signature will go in this section, usually signed in black or blue ink with a pen. Skip a line after your signature and the P.S.

7. P.S.: If you want to add anything additional to the letter, you write a P.S. (post script) and the message after that.

Return Address Line 1 #1

Return Address Line 2

Date (Month Day, Year) #2

Dear Name of Recipient, #3

Body Paragraph 1

.....

Body Paragraph 2

.....

Body Paragraph 3

..... #4

Closing (Sincerely...), #5

Signature #6

P.S. #7

Sample Friendly Letter

506 Country Lane
North Idunnoville AB T8Y J4R
December 16, 2005

Dear Susan,

It feels like such a long time since the last time I saw you. I know it's only been several weeks since I saw you. So far my summer has been great!

I spend my all my weekends at the beach. I am getting a nice tan and you can no longer say I am paler than you. I have been playing lots of volleyball, surfing and building a nice collection of sea shells. Just this past weekend I took second place in a sandcastle building contest!

On the weekdays I work. I drive an ice cream truck around and sell ice cream to the kids. It is so cool. It is a combination of the two things I love most, ice cream and kids. The pay isn't too great but I love the job so much.

I hope the summer's been going well for you too. There's only a month and a half left in summer vacation and after that it's back to school. Would you like to meet up some time to before school starts?

Your friend,
Signature

P.S. John Austin says hi.

Chester Squiggly
506 Country Lane
Idunnoville AB T87 J4R

Susan Student
4330-112 Street
Edmonton AB T6J 2C1

Friendly Letter Checklist

- Heading (return address & date)
- Salutation
- Introductory paragraph
- Body paragraph(s)
- Concluding paragraphs
- Closing
- Signature
- Tone (characterized by informal word choice)
- Indentations
- Envelope (return & mailing addresses)

Friendly Letter Sample

1234 Any Street (Your street address)
My Town, OH 45764 (City, Province Postal Code))
July 12, 2007 (Current Date)

Dear John, (Notice the use of a comma after the greeting)

Introductory Paragraph: Use this paragraph to explain your purpose for writing. Try to include at least 3–4 sentences. Friendly letters are a form of casual correspondence, so the number of paragraphs and sentences per paragraph can vary greatly.

Notice the use of indentation to indicate the beginning of a new paragraph. This is a more traditional letter format. Also note the formatting of the heading information (your address area) and how it aligns with the closing information below.

As shown in this Friendly Letter Sample, no Inside Address (the recipient's address) is needed. Many friendly letters even omit the sender's address and just use the date as a heading.
(Closing options in a friendly letter are more numerous and often casual)

Sincerely,
Your Signature

(Sign your name after the closing. Your name does **not** need to appear typed beneath your signature in a friendly letter.)

P.S.

Scoring Guide: *Friendly* Writing Assignment

Content

Focus

When marking **CONTENT** appropriate for the Grade 8 *Friendly* Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- ideas and development of the topic are effective
- the purpose of the assignment is fulfilled with complete and relevant information
- the tone is appropriate for a business letter, and awareness of audience is evident

Meets the <i>Standard of Excellence</i> 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ideas are perceptive, and development of the topic is clear and effective.• Pertinent information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment.• A tone appropriate for the addressee is effectively maintained.
Approaches the <i>Standard of Excellence</i> 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ideas are thoughtful, and development of the topic is generally effective.• Significant information is presented, and this information is substantiated by specific details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.• A tone appropriate for the addressee is clearly maintained.
Clearly Meets the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ideas are appropriate, and development of the topic is adequate.• Relevant information is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose of the assignment.• A tone appropriate for the addressee is generally maintained.
Does Not Clearly Meet the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ideas are superficial, and development of the topic is incomplete.• Information presented is imprecise and/or vague. Supporting details are insignificant and/or lacking. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled.• A tone appropriate for the addressee is evident but not maintained.
Clearly Below the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ideas are overgeneralized, and development of the topic is ineffective.• Information is irrelevant and/or missing. Supporting details are obscure and/or absent. The purpose of the assignment is not fulfilled.• Little awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee is evident.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content.

Note: Content and Content Management are equally weighted.

Student work must be related to the assignment. Letters that are completely “off topic” will be awarded a mark of **Insufficient**.

Scoring Guide: *Friendly* Writing Assignment

Content Management

Focus

When marking **CONTENT MANAGEMENT** appropriate for the Grade 9 *Friendly* Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- words and expressions are used accurately and effectively
- sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.) are controlled
- the format of a business letter and an envelope are consistently applied

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Meets the <i>Standard of Excellence</i> 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are consistently accurate and effective. • The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present do not impede meaning. • The envelope and letter are essentially free from format errors.
Approaches the <i>Standard of Excellence</i> 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective. • The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present rarely impede meaning. • The envelope and letter contain few format errors and/or omissions.
Clearly Meets the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective. • The writing demonstrates basic control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present occasionally impede meaning. • The envelope and letter contain occasional format errors and/or omissions.
Does Not Clearly Meet the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are frequently vague and/or imprecise. • The writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors frequently impede meaning. • The envelope and letter contain frequent format errors and/or omissions.
Clearly Below the <i>Acceptable Standard</i> 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are inaccurate and/or misused. • The writing demonstrates a lack of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors severely impede meaning. • The envelope and letter contain numerous and glaring format errors and/or omissions.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Note: Content and Content Management are *equally weighted*.