



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 3: Module 2B: Unit 3: Lesson 1

Writing a Research-Based Letter: Launching the Performance Task



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can produce writing that is appropriate to task and purpose (with support). (W.3.4)
I can use the writing process to plan, revise, and edit my writing (with support). (W.3.5)
I can compare how people use language when they write versus when they talk. (L.3.3)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can examine and analyze a model of a research-based informative letter.
- I can contribute ideas for the creation of an anchor chart about a quality research-based informative letter.

Ongoing Assessment

- Examining and Analyzing a Model for Writing discussion



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Engaging the Writer: Reviewing the Performance Task and Unpacking the Learning Targets (7 minutes)2. Work Time<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Examining and Analyzing a Model for Writing (25 minutes)B. Analyzing the Model Letter—Constructing Anchor Charts (20 minutes)3. Closing and Assessment<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Debrief: Conventions of Letter Writing (5 minutes)B. Introduce Homework (3 minutes)4. Homework<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Tell someone at home about the performance task. Describe the five main parts of a letter. Practice using the five parts of a letter by writing to a family member or friend you have not seen in a while. Talk with someone at home about where this person lives and what you might want to write about.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throughout the module, students have built an understanding of how customs and traditions reflect a country’s culture. They have read a <i>Magic Tree House</i> book and accompanying informational texts to gather a rich collection of information. In this unit, students will learn how to incorporate some of this information into their writing for the performance task. The performance task gives them a chance to share their learning about the culture of the country they have researched by writing a letter to Mary Pope Osborne, the author of the <i>Magic Tree House</i> books, urging her to write a new book, set in the present day, about the country they have researched. In this informative/explanatory letter, students present their research about the culture of the country and suggest ideas for the plot of the new book.• The lessons in this unit contain instruction on the specific writing skills necessary to craft this informative letter. In Lesson 1, students examine a model of a letter to Mary Pope Osborne urging her to write a book on present-day France. Students became somewhat familiar with this country in the End of Unit 2 Assessment, but they do not need any background information about the country to analyze the way the model was written. From this model, students will begin to identify the criteria for their letter.• Throughout this unit, students will be build their knowledge and skills regarding writing letters with. See Unit 3 overview for details, and preview all teaching notes in Lessons 1-12. This will help you be aware of the writing tasks in each lessons, since some will be guided and some independent.• Since the performance task writing takes the form of a letter, the early lessons of this unit could coincide with additional instruction around letter writing if you choose. The Closing of this lesson introduces students to the five main parts of a letter.• A sample Letter Writing template is included in the supporting materials. Consider using this with the homework assignment.• Students are assigned independent reading for homework often in this unit. See Unit 3 overview for details: be sure to have launched Independent Reading – preferably before you begin Unit 3, but certainly before Lesson 4.• There are quite a few materials in this lesson, since it launches the work of the unit. Preview carefully.



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Review the Performance Task document (stand-alone).– Create and post Analyzing the Model Letter anchor charts 1, 2, and 3, and the Conventions of Letter Writing anchor chart.– Review the Performance Task Invitation: Annotated.• Post: Learning targets.

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
research-based, quality, criteria, performance task	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance Task Invitation (one to display)• Document camera• Performance Task Invitation: Key Phrases in Bold (for teacher reference)• Performance Task Model: Writing about France (one per student and one to display)• Examining a Model Letter: Group recording form (one per group and one to display)• Work Time A Steps (one to display)• Analyzing the Model Letter anchor chart 1: Opening (new; co-created with students during Work Time B; see supporting materials)• Analyzing the Model Letter anchor chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs (new; co-created with students during Work Time B; see supporting materials)• Analyzing the Model Letter anchor chart 3: Closing (new; co-created with students during Work Time B; see supporting materials)• Conventions of Letter Writing anchor chart (new; teacher-created; see supporting materials)• Letter Writing template (optional; one per student)



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Writer: Reviewing the Performance Task and Unpacking the Learning Targets (7 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Congratulate students on their hard work in Unit 2. They have gathered great research to successfully complete the performance task.• Reintroduce the performance task by displaying the Performance Task Invitation via a document camera.• Read the invitation aloud two times:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “Author Mary Pope Osborne has announced she will write a new <i>Magic Tree House</i> book! Instead of traveling to a place in the past, however, Ms. Osborne has decided that Jack and Annie will return in the present to a country they’ve already visited. Before she begins writing, Ms. Osborne wants to be sure there are plenty of interesting things about the culture of the country that she can include in her new story. <p>“You have been invited to conduct this research for her! After conducting research with your small group about your assigned country, you will individually write a letter to the author of the <i>Magic Tree House</i> series to inform her about the culture of your country today. This will help her decide whether she should write a new book on this country. Include information about two aspects of culture that you discovered in your <i>Exploring Countries</i> text. Use accurate facts, definitions, and details from your research to explain each. At the end of your letter, provide a brief description of how Mary Pope Osborne might use the information you found in a new book on this country.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deconstruct the wording of the Performance Task Invitation to ensure that students understand the requirements of the letter. Consider asking:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What do we know?”• (See Performance Task Invitation: Key Phrases in Bold for additional guidance). Listen for students to suggest the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– We know that Mary Pope Osborne, the author of the <i>Magic Tree House</i> books, is planning to write a new book.– We know that she wants to have Jack and Annie return to a country they’ve been to before. This country will be the setting.– We know that Ms. Osborne plans to have the story take place in the present, not in the past like most of her other stories.– We know that she’s reaching out to student writer-researchers such as yourselves for suggestions for Jack and Annie’s return visit to a country they’ve been to in the past.– We know that Ms. Osborne is looking for research-based information about culture to use in her new book.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider providing nonlinguistic symbols (e.g., a picture of a list for <i>plan</i>) to assist ELLs in making connections with vocabulary.• Clarify vocabulary with ELLs. They can record new terms in personal dictionaries or vocabulary logs.



Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct students' attention to the learning targets. Read them aloud, pausing after each to ask for volunteers to put the learning target into their own words. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * "I can examine and analyze a model of a research-based informative letter." * "I can contribute ideas for the creation of an anchor chart about a quality research-based informative letter." 	
Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Examining and Analyzing a Model for Writing (25 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display and distribute the Performance Task Model: Writing about France. • Remind students that they learned about France and its culture in the End of Unit 2 Assessment. Ask them to follow along as you read the Performance Task Model: Writing about France aloud. • Display the Examining a Model Letter: Group recording form. • Explain that students will work with their Research Group from Unit 2 to carefully examine and analyze the Performance Task Model. • Orient them to the format of the Examining a Model Letter: Group recording form, focusing primarily on the right-side column ("What do we notice? What is the purpose of this part of the letter?"). • Display the Work Time A Steps. Read each step aloud and clarify as necessary. Tell students the Work Time A Steps will remain on display for them to reference if needed. • Stress the importance of group members working together, using the strong discussion skills they worked hard to develop in Units 1 and 2. • Ask students to take a pencil and quietly move to meet their Research Groups in their designated areas. • Distribute <u>one copy</u> of the Examining a Model Letter: Group recording form to each Research Group. Tell students that they will work with their groups to complete the Group recording form, but they should designate one member as a spokesperson to share their group's thinking with the class. • Tell them they will have 20 minutes to complete this Group recording form and ask them to begin. • Circulate and assist as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use thoughtful grouping. ELL language acquisition is facilitated by interacting with native speakers of English who provide models of language.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening carefully to these discussions may serve as an informal formative assessment, providing useful information about what students know and where they may need extra support in the lessons to come. 	
<p>B. Analyzing the Model Letter—Constructing Anchor Charts (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refocus students' attention whole class. Display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing the Model Letter Anchor Chart 1: Opening, Analyzing the Model Letter Anchor Chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs, and Analyzing the Model Letter Anchor Chart 3: Closing. Quickly remind students that during Work Time A, they were tasked with deconstructing the Performance Task Model to determine what they noticed about each part of the letter and what the purpose was of each part of the letter. Starting with Anchor Chart 1: Opening, call on the spokesperson from two or three Research Groups to share their group's thinking. Record what the spokespeople say on the Anchor Chart 1: Opening, asking clarifying and probing questions as necessary. (Note: This series of anchor charts is formatted to prompt students' thinking around an opening, body, and closing of a letter. When constructing Anchor chart 1 with students, tell students that these various "parts" of a the letter are named the "opening.") Follow this same process with Anchor Chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs and Anchor Chart 3: Closing, helping students to clarify and synthesize information before recording it on the anchor charts. At the completion of this work, ask for volunteers to read the anchor charts aloud. If time allows or if it seems necessary, ask brief probing questions to check for understanding of the purpose of the various parts of the letter. Redirect students' attention to the learning targets and read them aloud again: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * "I can examine and analyze a model of a research-based informative letter." * "I can contribute ideas for the creation of an anchor chart about a quality research-based informative letter." Ask students to use Fist to Five to show their personal success with each target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration supports students' engagement.



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Debrief: Conventions of Letter Writing (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display the Performance Task Model: Writing about France.• Tell students that you are now going to examine the model letter to look for specific conventions of letter writing.• Direct their attention to the posted Conventions of Letter Writing anchor chart. Ask for volunteers to read the five parts of a letter (heading, greeting, body, closing, signature) and their descriptions aloud.• Point out where these parts are found in the model letter.• Briefly discuss how the relationship of the sender to the recipient will dictate the content of the body of the letter. For example, a letter to a family member would look very different from a letter to a person they've never met or don't know well.	
<p>B. Introduce Homework (3 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the homework assignment; students will have two days to complete this homework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider providing a written copy of the homework assignment that lists the topic ideas and makes clear the time frame for the assignment.



Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell someone at home about the performance task. Describe the five main parts of a letter.• Practice using the five parts of a letter by writing to a family member or friend you have not seen in a while. Talk with someone at home about where this person lives and what you might want to write about.• Work on your letter over the next two days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If students do not have a family member or friend to write a letter to, they could write to a former teacher or other personnel in the school.• Students can also use the letter generator at readwritethink.org: http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/letter-generator-30005.html This interactive tool is easy to use and takes students through the steps of writing a five-part friendly letter.• Students who lack the ability or responsibility for homework completion will need to be provided time and/or support in school in order to share a letter in Lesson 3.



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Grade 3: Module 2B: Unit 3: Lesson 1

Supporting Materials



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Performance Task Invitation

Author Mary Pope Osborne has announced she will write a new *Magic Tree House* book! Instead of traveling to a place in the past, however, Ms. Osborne has decided that Jack and Annie will return in the present to a country they've already visited. Before she begins writing, Ms. Osborne wants to be sure there are plenty of interesting things about the culture of the country that she can include in her new story.

You have been invited to conduct this research for her! After conducting research with your small group about your assigned country, you will individually write a letter to the author of the *Magic Tree House* series to inform her about the culture of your country today. This will help her decide whether she should write a new book on this country. Include information about two aspects of culture that you discovered in your *Exploring Countries* text. Use accurate facts, definitions, and details from your research to explain each. At the end of your letter, provide a brief description of how Mary Pope Osborne might use the information you found in a new book on this country.



Performance Task Invitation: Key Phrases in Bold
(For Teacher Reference)

Author Mary Pope Osborne has announced she will write a new *Magic Tree House* book! Instead of traveling to a place in the past, however, Ms. Osborne has decided that Jack and Annie will **return in the present to a country they've already visited**. Before she begins writing, Ms. Osborne wants to be sure there are plenty of interesting things about the culture of the country that she can include in her new story.

You have been invited to conduct this research for her! After conducting research with your small group about your assigned country, you will individually **write a letter to the author** of the *Magic Tree House* series to **inform her** about **the culture of your country today**. This will help her decide whether she should write a new book on this country. Include information about two aspects of culture that you discovered in your *Exploring Countries* text. Use **accurate facts, definitions, and details** from your research to **explain** each. At the end of your letter, provide a brief description of **how Mary Pope Osborne might use the information** you found in a new book on this country.

What do we know?

- We know that Mary Pope Osborne, the author of the *Magic Tree House* books, is planning to write a new book.
- We know that she wants to have Jack and Annie return to a country they've been to before. This country will be the setting.
- We know that Ms. Osborne plans to have the story take place in the present, not in the past like all of her other stories.
- We know that she's reaching out to student writer-researchers such as yourself for suggestions for Jack and Annie's return visit to a country they've been to in the past.
- We know that Ms. Osborne is looking for research-based information to use in her new book.
- We know that she's specifically looking for information about the culture of the country and the people who live there to include within her story's plot.



Performance Task Model:
Writing about France

November 11, 2013

Dear Ms. Pope,

I was so excited to hear you were writing a new *Magic Tree House* book series that I wanted to write you this letter. I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they've adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country. There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.

One thing I discovered in my research was that food is a very important part of French culture. Did you know that in France the biggest meal of the day is what we call lunch? It's true! In France, it is a custom for families to all be together for this midday meal. The meal has different parts, but the main part of the meal is called the entrée. Something that is part of every meal in France is a special type of bread called a baguette. It's a long, thin loaf of bread. This custom of having a baguette with every meal is so important that there are 35,000 bakeries in France! I'll bet your readers would love to find out more about the eating customs of people living in France in your book.

Oh, I'd also like to tell you about some of the special events that happen that are important to the people of France. There is a very famous bicycle race that happens every year. This traditional bike race is called the Tour de France. This race is so long—over 2,200 miles—that it takes three weeks from start to finish. The course takes the bicyclists all over Europe. I found out that the Tour de France always ends in Paris, France's most well-known city. Another special tradition in France is the holiday called Mardi Gras. Everyone in France looks forward to Mardi Gras. People wear fancy costumes, and there are parades in towns and cities. You might want to include traditions like the Tour de France or Mardi Gras in your book.

As you can see from what I've shared, France would be a perfect return destination for Jack and Annie for one of your new *Magic Tree House* books. Annie would love being introduced to French food, since she is always so willing to try new things. And can you imagine what Jack and Annie would say if they were to see the Tour de France? Maybe they could even take part and ride in it. I hope you will consider sending Jack and Annie back to France. Good luck with your decision!

Your devoted reader,
Sam Student



Examining a Model Letter:
Group Recording Form

Parts of the Letter	What do we notice? What is the purpose of this part of the letter?
Nov. 11, 2013	<hr/> <hr/>
Dear Ms. Pope,	<hr/> <hr/>
I was so excited to hear you were writing a new <i>Magic Tree House</i> book series that I wanted to write you this letter. I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they're adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country. There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
One thing I discovered in my research was that food is a very important part of French culture. Did you know that in France the biggest meal of the day is what we call lunch? It's true! In France, it is a custom for families to all be together for this midday meal. The meal has different parts but the main part of the meal is called the entrée. Something that is part of every meal in France is a special type of bread called a baguette. It's a long, thin loaf of bread. This custom of having a baguette with every meal is so important that there are 35,000 bakeries in France! I'll bet your readers would love to find out more about the eating customs of people living in France in your book.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



Examining a Model Letter:
Group Recording Form

Parts of the Letter	What do we notice? What is the purpose of this part of the letter?
Oh, I'd also like to tell you about some of the special events that happen that are important to the people of France. There is a very famous bicycle race that happens every year. This traditional bike race is called the Tour de France. This race is so long—over 2,200 miles—that it takes three weeks from start to finish. The course takes the bicyclists all over Europe. I found out that the Tour de France always ends in Paris, France's most well-known city. Another special tradition in France is the holiday called Mardi Gras. Everyone in France looks forward to Mardi Gras. People wear fancy costumes, and there are parades in towns and cities. You might want to include traditions like the Tour de France or Mardi Gras in your book.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
As you can see from what I've shared, France would be a perfect return destination for Jack and Annie for one of your new <i>Magic Tree House</i> books. Annie would love being introduced to French food, since she is always so willing to try new things. And can you imagine what Jack and Annie would say if they were to see the Tour de France? Maybe they could even take part and ride in it. I hope you will consider sending Jack and Annie back to France. Good luck with your decision!	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Your devoted reader,	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Sam Student	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



Work Time A Steps

- Read the model letter again with your group.
- Take each part of the letter, one at a time, and carefully examine it by rereading it and then discussing the answers to these questions:
 1. What do we notice?
 2. What is the purpose of this part of the letter?
- Record the group's thinking on the Examining a Model Letter: Group recording form.
- Select a spokesperson who will orally share the group's work if called on during our sharing as a whole group. Give the spokesperson an opportunity to practice out loud with the group if time allows.



Anchor Chart 1: Opening

Nov. 11, 2013

Dear Ms. Pope,



Anchor Chart 1: Opening

I was so excited to hear you were writing a new *Magic Tree House* book series that I wanted to write you this letter. I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they're adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country. There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.



Anchor Chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs

One thing I discovered in my research was that food is a very important part of French culture. Did you know that in France the biggest meal of the day is what we call lunch? It's true! In France, it is a custom for families to all be together for this midday meal. The meal has different parts but the main part of the meal is called the entrée. Something that is part of every meal in France is a special type of bread called a baguette. It's a long, thin loaf of bread. This custom of having a baguette with every meal is so important that there are 35,000 bakeries in France! I'll bet your readers would love to find out more about the eating customs of people living in France in your book.



Anchor Chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs

Oh, I'd also like to tell you about some of the special events that happen that are important to the people of France. There is a very famous bicycle race that happens every year. This traditional bike race is called the Tour de France. This race is so long—over 2,200 miles—that it takes three weeks from start to finish. The course takes the bicyclists all over Europe. I found out that the Tour de France always ends in Paris, France's most well-known city. Another special tradition in France is the holiday called Mardi Gras. Everyone in France looks forward to Mardi Gras. People wear fancy costumes, and there are parades in towns and cities. You might want to include traditions like the Tour de France or Mardi Gras in your book.



Anchor Chart 3: Closing

As you can see from what I've shared, France would be a perfect return destination for Jack and Annie for one of your new *Magic Tree House* books. Annie would love being introduced to French food, since she is always so willing to try new things. And can you imagine what Jack and Annie would say if they were to see the Tour de France? Maybe they could even take part and ride in it. I hope you will consider sending Jack and Annie back to France. Good luck with your decision!

Your devoted reader,

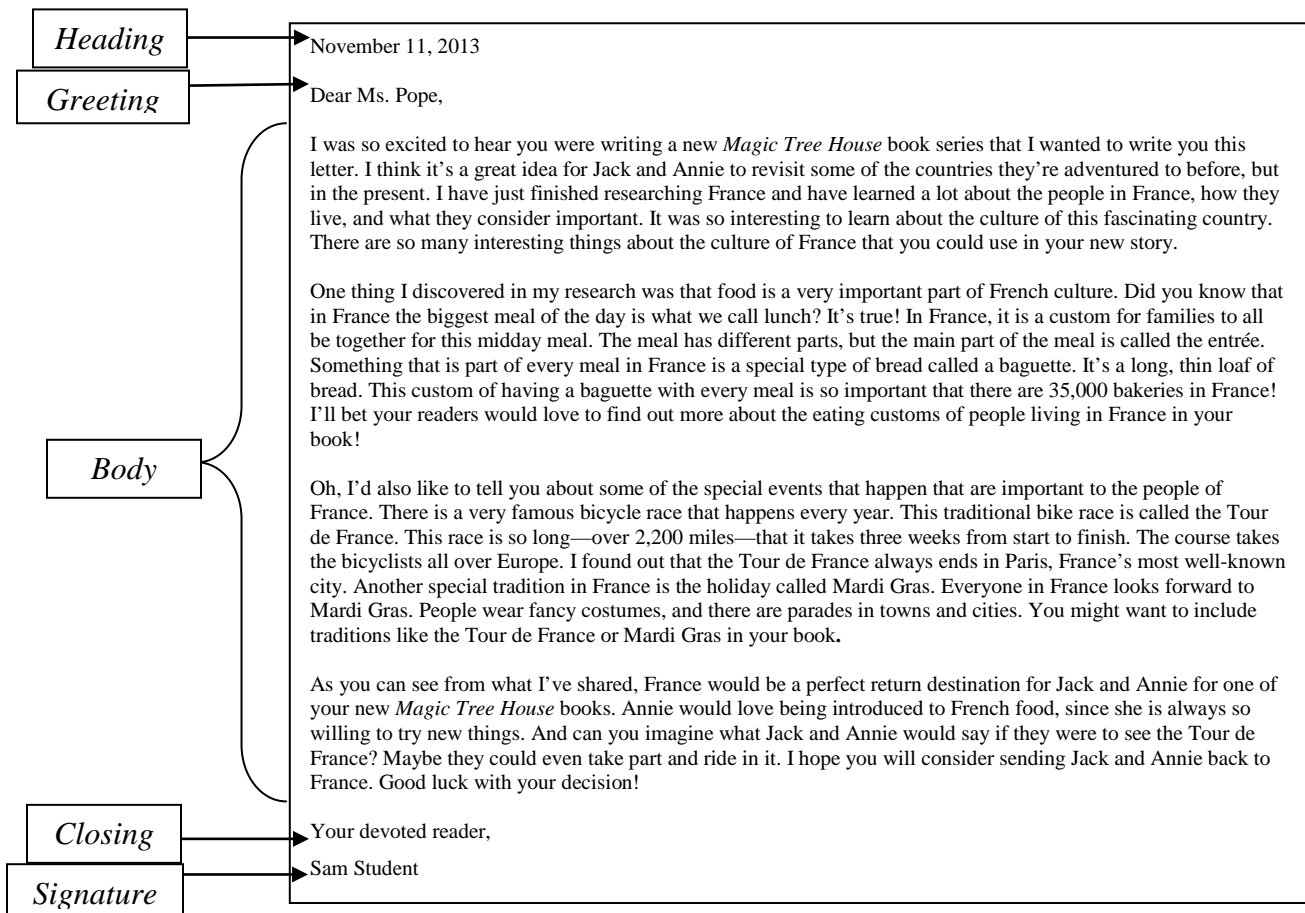
Sam Student



Conventions of Letter Writing Anchor Chart

Letters have these basic parts: **heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature.**

- The heading includes the two-line address of the sender and the date. Sometimes only the date appears in the heading.
- The greeting is a salutation and usually starts with the word “Dear” followed by the name of the letter recipient and then a comma.
- The body is the heart of the letter. It is the main text of the letter and has all the information being shared by the sender to the person he or she is writing to. The body can be one paragraph or several. Each paragraph should be indented, or a blank line should be placed between paragraphs.
- The closing is the way the letter is closed, or ended. It includes a short capitalized expression such as “Sincerely” or “Love” and is followed by a comma. A blank line should come between the body and the closing.
- The signature is the sender’s name, and it comes directly below the closing.





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