

Lesson Topic/ Title	Writing a Letter to Your Representative: Introduction (Lesson #6)	Class Level /GLE	ASE History/Level D & E, GLE 8.0+
Unit Title	Take Action! Civic Engagement Unit	Teacher Name	Brooke Machado

CCRSAE <i>(use notation & shorthand)</i>	ELA Learning Objectives By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:	Evidence of Learning Students will show their learning by:
W4D: Clear, coherent, and appropriately styled writing	apply the structure of a formal letter	setting up and writing up to the first paragraph of a formal letter addressed to their representative; self-assessing their draft letter against the template and checklist
W5D: The Writing Process	draft the beginning of a formal letter to a government leader	brainstorming and organizing their letters; drafting the first paragraph of a formal letter to their representative
L3D: Language Choices for style, tone, and message	choose language that expresses ideas precisely while maintaining appropriate style and tone	including precise vocabulary and formal language in their draft of the first paragraph of a formal letter

Student Texts and Other Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Include authentic print and/or digital texts that are appropriate for adults.</i> ● <i>Include texts that accurately and respectfully represent diverse identities, cultures, and perspectives.</i> ● <i>Include text complexity level for each text.</i> ● <i>List instructional videos, websites, and handouts for students.</i> ● <i>Include hyperlinks.</i> 		
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● student access to computers and the internet ● projector if teacher wants to project information at various points during lesson for explaining, giving instructions, or modeling 		
<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal Letter Outline / template (Google Slides) ● Checklist (Google Doc) 		
<p>Instructional Shifts <i>(Which ones are addressed in this lesson?)</i></p>		Engage with complex text and its academic language.
	X	Ground reading, writing, and speaking in evidence from literary and informational texts.
	X	Build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

Instructional Process

Sequence and concisely describe culturally-responsive and evidence-based instruction.

- Incorporate the “I do,” “We do,” “You do” model.
- Contextualize skill instruction within authentic texts and tasks.
- Incorporate a variety of tasks and interactions that foster engagement.
- Support learners in making connections to their lives.
- Involve students in using technology to find, evaluate, consume, create, organize, communicate, and share digital content.
- Include choice and flexibility where appropriate to meet diverse needs.
- Provide additional modifications as needed for English Learners, students with learning disabilities (LD), and students at different levels.

PART OF LESSON	TIME / MATERIALS	STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS NOTE: Vocabulary instruction is not included here; it would be addressed as a separate lesson each day.	FURTHER DIFFERENTIATION <i>(e.g., different levels, EL, LD)</i>
<p>Warm-Up/ Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review unit goal/cumulative project. ● Review key learnings from previous lesson(s)/Activate prior knowledge. ● Introduce the objectives -- and address why they are important. 	<p>10 minutes</p> <p>whiteboard or chart paper</p>	<p>Review the final project. Remind students that by the end of the unit, they will demonstrate their understanding of the different levels of government by writing a formal letter to an appropriate elected official at the local, state, or federal level about an issue important to them. Explain that this lesson will prepare students to write their formal letter for the project.</p> <p>Activate students’ prior knowledge by asking: <i>What are the different pieces of information that go in a letter that a person writes?</i></p> <p>Ask students to share their ideas verbally while you write them on the whiteboard. A digital whiteboard like Jamboard can be used for a remote class or in-person class setting. A physical whiteboard or chart paper can be used for an in-person class setting.</p> <p>Possible responses: <i>the date, recipient’s address, Dear ___, Sincerely, ___, your name, etc.</i></p> <p>Explain to students that in this lesson, they will learn what types of different information go into a formal letter and the specific order in which it goes. Students will also begin to draft their own formal letter, which they will have the opportunity to send to one of their representatives. Explain that when writing something formal like</p>	<p>For students in need of extra support, ask them to think about what is usually at the top of a letter, then go on to the middle parts of a letter and the bottom, providing hints as needed.</p>

		<p>this, it's important to make a draft first. Then they can fine-tune it, perhaps with input from a trusted friend or family member, to make sure it says what they want to say effectively.</p>	
<p>Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and model 1) the target knowledge or skill and/or 2) processes to follow to accomplish tasks. • Provide scaffolded practice and feedback. • Engage learners in inquiring, exploring, and problem-solving. • Include multiple kinds of interactions (e.g., whole group, small group, pairs). • Pose questions that require critical thinking and evidence from text. • Use technology appropriate to the task(s). 	<p>70 minutes</p> <p>Example of formal letter outline (make a copy if you want to write in it)</p> <p>Checklist (make a copy if you want to use it to check items off)</p>	<p>1) Formatting the letter</p> <p>Referring to the list of information that was generated in the warm-up, prompt students by asking, “<i>What is the very first thing we should write at the top of a letter?</i>” [Note: Students will likely answer the date or the recipient's address, but the answer is the sender’s name.]</p> <p>Display/project your copy of the Formal Letter Outline / template and have students determine whether they were correct or not Line by line, reveal the contents and structure of the letter by asking students what is next. Engage students to make and check predictions until the entire letter outline is revealed.</p> <p>Ask students: <i>What parts of the letter was the group able to recall? Which parts were not mentioned or forgotten? Is there anything about the letter outline that surprises you?</i></p> <p>2) Modeling</p> <p>Inform students that they will use the template to help guide the teacher in writing the first letter as a group, about a topic of the teacher’s choice. (Suggestion: the importance of funding for Adult Education.*) After that modeling, they'll be ready to start their own letters to their own reps.</p> <p>Direct students to look at the template. Ask “<i>What is the very first thing I should write at the top of this letter?</i>” Model for students by writing your name, followed by your address (use the school’s address if preferred). Continue to prompt the students up to the first body paragraph about what comes next and continue modeling. Emphasize proper capitalization, punctuation and spacing of the names, titles, addresses, and date.</p>	

	<p>Computers</p> <p>Google Docs</p>	<p>When arriving at the first body paragraph, stop to discuss what that section may look like and what information is appropriate or inappropriate to include. This is a good point to mention the use of formal language vs. informal language, and using tier 2 and 3 words to add more sophistication and professionalism to the letters.</p> <p>3) Drafting Direct students to go to the computer(s) and start their own letters about their selected topics, using Google Docs. Display the example letter for student reference. [Note: At this point, students will only be writing up to paragraph 1 (introducing self and topic), as more planning and instruction needs to take place for paragraphs 2 and 3.]</p> <p>4) Self-Assessing At the end of this lesson, have students self-assess their letter against the template. Does it contain all the parts of the template, up through the first paragraph? (Formatting and spelling can be checked in future lessons, along with adding the second and third paragraphs.)</p> <p>You may also choose to show students the checklist for the letter as a whole, as well as using that checklist in a later lesson after their letters are complete.</p>	<p>For students needing extra support, provide a Google Doc with a writing frame for the letter, with sentence starters and transition words, allowing students to fill in the key details.</p>
<p>Wrap-Up/ Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lead reflection in what students learned and how they might use what they learned in their lives.</i> • <i>Preview the next lesson.</i> 	<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>To close the lesson, provide the following reflection prompts for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One thing you learned</i> • <i>One thing that surprised you</i> • <i>One question you have</i> • <i>One way this activity has helped you (in the real-world or for the final project)</i> <p>Students may orally respond to as many prompts as they would like. Challenge students to use two (or more) of the vocabulary words from the unit in their response, thus integrating vocabulary practice.</p> <p>Note: Vocabulary instruction is not included but would be addressed as a separate lesson each day. It is important for vocabulary instruction to take place prior to this lesson to enable students to fully comprehend texts and learning materials, as well as engage in class discussions and writing activities.</p>	

		<p>Vocabulary words should be visible to students through a class or personal word wall.</p> <p>Formatively evaluate students' understanding of the lesson and of the vocabulary by monitoring student responses during this conversation. Make notes about any concerns, or misconceptions to address in subsequent classes. Reinforce vocabulary knowledge by "shouting out" any responses that use the vocabulary words in a particularly skillful way.</p>	
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Lesson Notes:

1. In preparation to write their letter, students need to have successfully:
 - a. learned about the three levels of government and the roles and responsibilities of each (Lesson #2)
 - b. documented who their federal, state and local representatives are (Lesson #3)
 - c. brainstormed current issues affecting individuals and the community (Lesson #5)
 - d. identify which representative to whom they are going to address their letter (Lesson #5)
2. *After teaching this unit several times, I advise that the teacher use one topic (e.g., the importance of adult education) to model all the parts of the letter. Writing the full letter can be broken up over several days, with the teacher modeling a few parts each day (with student assistance) and then having the students then apply what they learned in writing those parts of their own letters.
3. Many students will write neither the recipient's nor their own addresses conforming to standards regarding proper punctuation, capitalization, spacing, etc. It is best to not address this issue at this time, but by providing a mini-lesson about writing addresses in the next class.
4. In the next lesson, teach students how to plan for their second and third paragraphs and then draft them. Include writing topic and closing sentences, providing appropriate reasons and details, and attending to word choice and formal language.