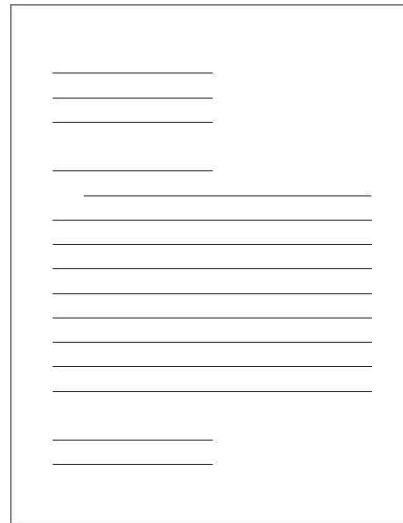


Letter To the Editor: Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Goals

- To formulate an opinion on a controversial issue
- To write a letter to the editor stating an opinion and providing supporting details
- To use proper business letter format



Overview: Students formulate an opinion on a controversial issue. They write a letter to the editor that expresses their opinion and provides supporting details.

Materials

- Copies of “Letter to Editor” template
- News articles on a controversial issue of interest to students

Directions

1. As a class (or individually for older students) read one or more news articles on a controversial issue of interest to students (for example, school uniforms, a new community park, environmental problems, a proposed law). Discuss the issue with the class and encourage them to talk with family and friends. Older students can continue to research the topic on their own.
2. Write two or more statements on the board that summarize different points of view, then take a survey to see how many students support each position. Ask students for reasons to support their positions and write them down.
3. Check the local paper for letters to the editor on the topic or on other topics of interest to students. Read examples and discuss what makes a good letter to the editor.
4. Give students copies of the “Letter to Editor” template. Review the different parts of a business letter. Ask each student to write a letter to the editor stating his or her opinion and providing supporting reasons. Students can use the business letter template for their draft to assure proper format or for their final copy.

5. Bring the daily newspaper to class to see if students' letters are printed. Clip, share and post published letters.

Stationery Studio Extensions

- Encourage students to use the business letter form to write opinion letters to government officials.
- Let students choose a *Stationery Studio* border related to a controversial topic of interest and then write a persuasive paragraph stating their opinion and providing supporting details.