



Teacher Resource

# Future of Letter Writing

## Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Why are fewer letters being delivered these days?
2. What changes is Australia Post proposing?
3. The average Australian household receives just over one letter a week. True or false?
4. Who owns Australia Post?
5. Make some predictions about how the postal system might change in the future.

## Activity: Note taking

Students will practise their note-taking skills while watching the BTN Future of Letter Writing story. After watching the story, ask students to reflect on and organise the information into three categories. What information in the story was positive, negative, or interesting?



## Activity: Class Discussion

Watch the BTN Future of Letter Writing story and use the following questions as a guide to discuss the topic:

- Why is Australia Post reconsidering delivering letters 5 days a week?
- Why are people sending fewer letters in the post?
- What are the different ways that you communicate with friends and family? What types of technologies do you use?
- Have you ever written a letter and posted it? Explain your answer.
- Have you ever received a handwritten letter in the post?
- Who would you like to send a letter to? Why?



### EPISODE 4

28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

#### KEY LEARNING

Students investigate how technology has changed the way we communicate and will practise writing a letter. They will also examine the difference between formal and informal letters.

#### CURRICULUM

##### English – Year 5

Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality.

##### English – Year 6

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text.

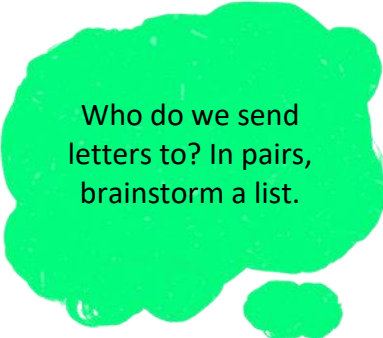
##### English – Year 6

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text.

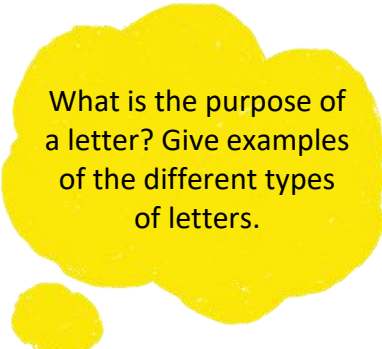
Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience.

Re-read and edit students' own and others' work using agreed criteria and explaining editing choices.

## Activity: Letter Writing



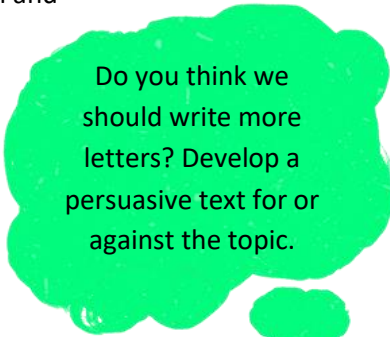
Who do we send letters to? In pairs, brainstorm a list.



What is the purpose of a letter? Give examples of the different types of letters.

Students will practise the art of letter writing. Below are some letter writing activities.

- Who would you like to send a letter to? Why? Students will design and create their own letter head or writing paper and write a letter to someone using their paper.
- Make a time capsule which includes a collection of letters handwritten by your students. Students can write to future students at the school telling them what school is like for them and then make a prediction about what school will be like in the future.
- Connect with a class from another country and ask if they would like to become pen pals with your class. Students will tell them what school life is like in Australia and then find out how their school life is similar or different.
- Students will explore an issue that is important to their school community. Students will then write a letter to their local council or member of parliament voicing their concerns and/or asking for change.
- Students will interview a friend or relative about letters they wrote (or still write).



Do you think we should write more letters? Develop a persuasive text for or against the topic.

## Activity: Questions to Research

Students will choose one of the questions below to explore in more detail.

- What are the different parts or features of a letter? For example, date, postal address, greeting, signature.
- What type of language would you use in an informal letter to a friend or relative? Compare the language used in an informal letter to the language used in a formal letter. Give examples.
- Why are letters useful primary sources? Investigate how letters can tell us about the writer's opinions and personality and tell us more about the past. Choose an important letter in history to interpret and then explain your findings to the class. Here are [some examples](#)
- How has technology changed the way we communicate?
- What are the differences and similarities between handwritten and digital letters. When would you hand write a letter? When would you send an email instead of a handwritten letter.
- What is meant by the term 'the art of handwritten letters is dying'? Explain using your own words.
- What is the future of 'snail mail'? Make some predictions about the postal mail system 20 years from now.

## Activity: Formal and Informal Letters

When you're writing formal or informal letters or emails, what should you include in it?  
Students will watch the following Everyday English videos to learn more.

### Formal letters

Watch the video and respond to the following questions:

- Give 3 examples of people you would send a formal letter or email to.
- When might you need to write a formal letter or email?
- Write a short formal letter or email using the tips that Sarah and Jack talk about in the video.



### Informal letters

Watch the video and respond to the following questions:

- Give 3 examples of people you would send an informal letter or email to.
- What sort of language do you use when you're writing an informal letter or email?
- Write a short informal letter or email using the tips that Sarah and Jack talk about in the video.



## Useful Websites

- [Australia Post says five-day-a-week letter delivery should be reconsidered after \\$200m loss](#) – ABC News
- [Dead Letters](#) – BTN
- [Snail Mail](#) – BTN