

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Performance Standard 3C.J

Each student will write two letters, one to the editor of the local newspaper addressing a current issue in the community and one (a friendly letter) to a friend who lives in a different region, telling the friend about the letter to the editor. The two letters will be evaluated for format and content accordingly.

#### Letter to the Editor

- *Formatting the letter:* include the components of a business letter (i.e., return address, date, inside address, salutation, body, closing, signature); place components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) on the page; punctuate components.
- *Organizing content – Message and Tone:* include five required parts of the message (i.e., person addressed, nature of the issue, how it was discovered, what will satisfy the writer, how to reach writer) in the body; use formal tone; use appropriate language.

#### Informal (Friendly) Letter

- *Formatting the letter:* include components of the friendly letter (i.e., date, salutation, body, closing, signature); place components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) on the page; punctuate components.
- *Organizing content – Message and Tone:* include in the body the parts of the message recorded in the business letter; use informal tone.

#### Procedures

1. ***In order to communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes (3C)***, students should experience sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
  - Write on one topic for different audiences by adjusting tone, voice, vocabulary and grammar conventions.
  - Accomplish the assumed purpose (e.g., job application, resume, petition).
  - Apply appropriate format and structure that effectively address a variety of real-life situations.
  - Adjust voice, tone, vocabulary and grammatical conventions according to purpose and audience.
  - Evaluate a variety of compositions for purpose, structure, content and details.Students studying agriculture/horticulture will have the opportunity in the agricultural/horticultural business classes to write formal and informal letters. In most cases, computers are available for this process. Letters to the editor are published in the newspaper, provided the proper format is followed. Some people do not write to the editor because they do not know how to phrase their comments. Students need to know the proper components of both types of letters so they will participate and feel good about how they express themselves. This standard aligns with Illinois Workplace Skill D4 (Communicating on the Job/Prepare written communication), K1 (Demonstrating Technological Literacy/Demonstrate basic keyboarding skills) and K2 (Demonstrating Technological Literacy/Demonstrate basic knowledge of computing).
2. Have the agricultural students review and discuss the assessment task and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
3. Students will have studied letters to the editor and friendly letters with an emphasis on the proper tone, style, format and vocabulary for each.
4. Students will have written several practice letters to the editor and friendly letters prior to the assessment.
5. Each student will write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper on a topic selected by the student of with limited support from the teacher. Possible topics for this letter could include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Convincing someone of the need to build a greenhouse to support the horticulture program.
  - b. Convincing decision-makers to keep the agriculture program at the high school.
  - c. Proving that the agriculture industry involves more than production agriculture.
  - d. Supporting economic development to keep young people in the community.
  - e. Showing the need for an FFA Alumni Chapter to support the local agriculture/horticulture program.
  - f. Showing the importance of agricultural literacy in the elementary school.
  - g. Asking for letters of support to be written to legislators supporting the agricultural education line item in the Illinois State Board of Education budget.

6. Each student will then write a friendly letter to someone outside the circulation area of the newspaper, telling a friend what was said to the editor.
7. Evaluate each student's performance using the rubric. Add each student's scores to determine the performance level.

**Examples of Student Work**

- [Meets](#)
- [Exceeds](#)

**Time Requirements**

- Two class periods

**Resources**

- Writing materials, including available technology
- Letter to the Editor Planning Sheet
- Letter to the Editor Rubric



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

- Exceeds standard (must receive 15 - 16 total points)     Approaches standard (must receive 7 -10 total points)  
 Meets standard (must receive 11 - 14 total points)     Begins standard or absent (must receive 4 - 6 total points)

	LETTER TO THE EDITOR		INFORMAL (FRIENDLY) LETTER	
	Format	Content – Message and Tone	Format	Content – Message and Voice
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All components of a business letter are present (i.e., return address, date, salutation, body, closing, signature).</li> <li>All components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphs, sequence of components) are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>All components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All required parts of the message are present in the body.</li> <li>Consistently uses formal tone.</li> <li>Consistently uses appropriate language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All components of the friendly letter are present (i.e., date, salutation, body, closing, signature).</li> <li>All components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphs, sequence of components) are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>All components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All parts of the message recorded in the letter to the editor are present in the body paragraphs.</li> <li>Consistently uses informal voice.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most components of a business are present.</li> <li>Most components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Most components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All required parts of the message are present in the body.</li> <li>Usually uses formal tone.</li> <li>Usually uses appropriate language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most components of the friendly letter are present.</li> <li>Most components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Most components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most parts of the message recorded in the letter to the editor are present in the body paragraphs.</li> <li>Usually uses informal tone of voice.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some components of a business letter are present.</li> <li>Some components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Some components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some of the required parts of the message are present in the body.</li> <li>Sometimes uses formal tone.</li> <li>Sometimes uses slang or jargon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some components of the friendly letter are present.</li> <li>Some components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Some components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parts of the message recorded in the letter to the editor are present in the body paragraphs.</li> <li>Sometimes uses informal tone of voice.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few or no components of the business letter are present.</li> <li>Few or no components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Few or no components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few or none of the required parts of the message are present in the body.</li> <li>Seldom or never uses formal tone.</li> <li>Overuses slang or jargon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few or no components of the friendly letter are present.</li> <li>Few or no components are properly placed on the page.</li> <li>Few or no components are properly punctuated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few or no parts of the message recorded in the letter to the editor are present in the body paragraphs.</li> <li>Seldom or never uses informal tone of voice.</li> </ul>
<b>Score</b>				