**Recorded Read Aloud Project**

Sample Assignment: Cover Letter

# Overview

You will write a professional letter addressed to an educator that explains the purpose and goals of your read aloud video.

# Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience writing to a different audience. The cover letter provides context for your read aloud videos. Explain the purpose of your video, the age of your target audience, your reasons for choosing the book, and what you hope children will gain from the video. The letters will be shared with Lauren Shinholster, Coordinator of Community Engagement, along with your final read aloud video, and will be used to shape the information accompanying your video in the Read Aloud Catalogue.

Reminders:

* Include a friendly opener.
* Explain the purpose of your letter.
* Avoid structuring your sentences negatively or using the word “not”. For example, instead of saying “she could not figure it out” say “she struggled to understand.”
* Accentuate the positives.
* Conclude on a positive note.
* Consider your audience – the educator does not necessarily care what you got out of making the video. They want to know how to use the video.

# Requirements

Your letter should be one page, single-spaced, and block formatted. See the Sample Letter for an example.

# Rubric

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Criteria** |
| A | Block formatting, 1 page, single-spaced. Properly addressed person, friendly opening sentence, explained purpose of the letter in first paragraph. Considered audience by providing appropriate information. Strong paragraphs & flow. Accentuated the positives. Proper conclusion. Clear and organized. |
| B | Somewhat lacking one main component (accentuating positives, organization, important content) or two small components (formatting, typos, clarity) |
| C | Lacking two components (accentuating positives, organization, important content, numerous clarity issues) or completely negative tone. |
| D | Lacking main components and small components |
| F | Did not follow guidelines |

# Sample Letter

*If you are using letterhead, do not include the sender's address at the top of the letter; instead, begin with the date.*

**Block Format**

123 Winner's Road
New Employee Town, PA 12345

March 16, 2001

Ernie English
1234 Writing Lab Lane
Write City, IN 12345

Dear Mr. English:

The first paragraph of a typical business letter is used to state the main point of the letter. Begin with a friendly opening; then quickly transition into the purpose of your letter. Use a couple of sentences to explain the purpose, but do not go in to detail until the next paragraph.

Beginning with the second paragraph, state the supporting details to justify your purpose. These may take the form of background information, statistics or first-hand accounts. A few short paragraphs within the body of the letter should be enough to support your reasoning.

Finally, in the closing paragraph, briefly restate your purpose and why it is important. If the purpose of your letter is employment related, consider ending your letter with your contact information. However, if the purpose is informational, think about closing with gratitude for the reader's time.

Sincerely,

Lucy Letter

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# Peer Review Guide

1. **1st paragraph (Intro)**
* Does the author start with a friendly opener?
* Is the purpose of the letter clearly defined?
	+ Did the author go into too much detail in the intro paragraph?
1. **Body paragraphs**
* Are the points mentioned in the intro explained in the body?
* Did the author break the body into separate paragraphs if/when necessary?
* Within the structure, were there any instances where the author did not discuss topics in the same order as they were presented in the intro?
* **Has the author considered the audience (providing only information that the reader would find useful)?**
* Has the author conveyed his/her message in a balanced, formal tone?
1. **Last paragraph (Conclusion)**
* Did the author briefly recap information?
* Did they provide new information in the conclusion? If so, have them move these to the body.
* Did they end on a friendly note?
1. **Format**
* There should be no header or APA format in the letters.
* Did the author use block formatting?
* Note any issues with spacing.
* Note any issues with the structure (date, Mercer’s address, salutation, intro, body, conclusion, closing, author’s signature block)
	+ Author’s signature block can simply look like the following:

Jane Doe

INT 201 student, 2021

* **Put a bracket and a question mark** around (or highlight) any sentences/passages that you had to read more than once to understand.
* **Make a note on the paper if anything seems to be missing.**
* If there are issues with the organization of paper, **use arrows and make suggestions** on where sections/sentences should be moved.
* After reading the letter, is there anything else you would like to suggest to the author?