

Letter Writing in Central Station

Summer Film Institute – 2014

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Grades 6 - 16

RELATED CONTENT AREAS

Film Studies, Spanish Language, Social Studies, Cultural Studies

INSTRUCTIONS

Overview	This lesson is based on the film <i>Central Station</i> and can be used to supplement the film. This lesson demonstrates the significance of letter writing and communicating in different cultures.		
Standards	NCSS Standard 1: Culture and cultural diversity: Explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies and cultures address similar human needs and concerns.		
Objectives	Students will: Explore the tradition of letter writing Explore the problem of illiteracy Explore the letter writer and groups that use this service	Materials	Film: Central Station Lined paper, pencils
Time	Variable	Vocabulary	Illiteracy, individuality, identity, migration,

PROCEDURE

1. Discuss what Letter Writers are:
 - Letter writers play an important social role in a country where the illiteracy rate is high.
 - Brazil's social life is characterized by a vast internal migration so letter writers connect to individuals and families.
 - Letter writers provide the people with a sense of individuality and identity.
2. Preview Activities: Ask the students to brainstorm ways that they think an illiterate person could get a letter written to a friend or family member. Discuss. Why do you think that people get paid to write letters in some countries?
3. Begin the film clip:

- Start at 00:00 – Stop at 2:10
 - Start at 2:31 – Stop at 2:47
 - Start at 8:39 – stop at 11:14
4. Discussion after the film: What do you think are the tools for letter writing? How would new technologies possibly change the traditional letter writers?
 5. Activity: Students will compare and contrast letter writing and letter dictation. Ask students to break into pairs. One student will write the letter and the other student will dictate the letter. Students will choose a theme from the film. Possible themes include:
 - 3:30-5:15 people climbing through the windows of the train and the train ride home
 - 11:20-12:30 Orphaned
 - 12:45-15:00 No Money No Letter
 - 16:20- 18:22 Offer of a Sandwich
 - 16:20- 18:22 Penalty for Stealing
 - 37:35-38:35 Bus Ride
 - 46:57-47:35 Hunger
 - 49:22-52:00 Stealing
 - 1:10:50-1:15:45 Religious Ceremony
 6. Students will write their letters using the correct format of a friendly letter utilizing sentence structure, capitalization, correct spelling and punctuation.
 7. Students will switch roles and respond to the letter.
 8. Students will list three adjectives describing the role of letter writing, and three adjectives describing the role of dictation.

EVALUATION

Use the Writing Rubric for Writing a Friendly letter (below)

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Students may make a video of their partner reading their letter.

Rubric for Letter writing (below)

Rubric for Letter Writing

	EXPERT 4 pts	LEARNER 3 pts	APPRENTICE 2 pts	NOVICE 1 pts	RELUCTANT 0 pts
GREETING	EXPERT A proper greeting is used in the correct place. The name has proper capitalization.	LEARNER Missing one of the following: *Proper greeting is used *Greeting in right place *Correct capitalization	APPRENTICE Missing two of the following: *Proper greeting is used *Greeting in right place *Correct capitalization	NOVICE A proper greeting is missing and if there is one it is not correctly capitalized three following	RELUCTANT Did not give a try
MESSAGE	EXPERT The letter stays on topic and makes sense. It addresses the three topics requested. There are enough sentences.	LEARNER The letter mostly stays on topic and makes sense as a whole. It addresses two of the three topics requested. Almost the correct length.	APPRENTICE The letter barely stays on topic and slightly makes sense. It hits one of the topics only. It is either too short or too long.	NOVICE The letter as a whole does not stay on topic and neither makes sense.	RELUCTANT Did not give a try
GRAMMAR AND SPELLING	EXPERT Sentences are written in the appropriate tenses and with correct spelling. There may be 1 or 2 grammar/spelling mistakes that do not affect the meaning of the message as a whole.	LEARNER Sentences are written mostly in the appropriate tenses and with some inaccuracies in spelling. There may be 3-5 grammar and/or spelling mistakes that somewhat affect the meaning of the message as a whole.	APPRENTICE Grammar tenses are spelling are used inaccurately. There may be more than 5 grammar and/or spelling mistakes that affect the meaning of the message as a whole.	NOVICE There are too many grammar and spelling mistakes that considerably affect the message.	RELUCTANT Did not give a try
PUNCTUATION & CAPITALISATION	EXPERT A capital letter is used at the beginning of each sentence. A correct spelling and punctuation mark is used properly.	LEARNER There are some capitalisation and /or spelling mistakes. A punctuation mark or two is missing.	APPRENTICE There are many capitalisation and /or spelling mistakes. There are some punctuation marks missing.	NOVICE There are too many capitalisation and spelling mistakes. Most punctuation marks are missing.	RELUCTANT Did not give a try
CLOSING	EXPERT Proper closing is included. Closing is used in the proper place and has correct capitalization.	LEARNER Proper closing is included but it is not correctly capitalised.	APPRENTICE Proper closing is included but it is misplaced nor capitalised.	NOVICE There is no closing at all	RELUCTANT Did not give a try

<http://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=NWX488X&sp=yes%27>