



Introduction

Writing is an integral part of our everyday lives. Almost every situation in which we find ourselves requires some type of writing. Even with the easy access to computers that exists in today's society, there are still forms to be filled out, applications to be completed, and lists to be made. Developing the writing skills necessary for the many formats presented in the real world is a critical part of preparing for life after high school.

This binder includes reproducible activities that provide practice with writing in many of the formats we encounter in our daily lives. Each of the seven units covers a wide range of writing situations and addresses key writing skills needed.

Based on her years of teaching language arts and reading to at-risk middle school students and GED classes to struggling adult learners, Bonnye Wier Cavazos created *Real-World Writing* to reach and engage students who struggle with writing. Each worksheet includes clear, simple directions and short activity questions and sentences written at a low reading level. The activities feature realistic graphic representations that middle and high school students as well as adults already encounter or will likely encounter soon, such as checks, lists, and college and job applications.

SEVEN UNITS

Each unit provides a lesson that addresses the corresponding writing topic. Included in each unit are directions for leading class discussion about the topic, a parent/guardian letter, ten activity sheets, suggested extension activities, and a unit assessment. The units are:

- Unit 1:** Business Letters
- Unit 2:** Personal Letters & Postcards
- Unit 3:** Banking Forms
- Unit 4:** Lists
- Unit 5:** Job Applications, Résumés & Cover Letters
- Unit 6:** Notes, Outlines & Reports
- Unit 7:** Forms, Applications & Contracts

UNIT LESSON

At the beginning of each unit is a lesson that introduces and teaches a real-world writing topic. Each lesson includes objectives, a materials list, and a complete lesson plan that provides for class discussion as well as “hands-on” participation.

**Unit 1: Business Letters**

OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify parts of business letters.
- Students will use proper capitalization and punctuation in letter writing.
- Students will write a variety of letters.

LESSON MATERIALS

Envelopes, sample business letters, examples of different letterheads collected from schools and businesses or created using print programs, access to the Internet, sticky notes, chart paper (optional)

LESSON PLAN

Introducing the Topic

What is a business letter?

Hold up an envelope with a business letter inside, and ask the students what it is. Discuss the parts: envelope, address, return address, stamp, postmark, paper, date line, letterhead, inside address, greeting, writing (body), closing, and signature. Discuss the differences between a personal letter and a business letter.

Why might you write a business letter?

Divide the students into small groups. Give each group several sticky notes. Ask the students to brainstorm reasons they might write a business letter (or any type of letter to someone other than a friend or family member). Have them record their responses on the sticky notes. On the board, create a web to show all these reasons. Write “business letters” in a circle on the center of the board or chart paper. Have the students post their sticky notes around the circle to show all the reasons they generated. Discuss the responses as a group.

Why is it important to be able to write business letters?

As a class, review the reasons the groups came up with for writing a business letter. Discuss the importance of those reasons.

WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER

After identifying some of the key components of business letters, review capitalization and punctuation rules. Write the categories “capitalization” and “punctuation” on the board. Begin making a list of rules regarding letters. For example, capitalize names, cities, streets, the first word of the greeting and closing, the first word of every sentence, and the pronoun “I.” This will bring up the topic of proper nouns. For punctuation, list the commas in dates, city/state lines, openings, and closings. Review abbreviations for states, focusing on the fact that they are written in capital letters with no periods between or after them.

1 Real-World Writing 1



Introduction

PARENT/GUARDIAN LETTER

Before beginning a new unit, a copy of the parent/guardian letter should be sent home with each student. The parent/guardian letter explains the topics being studied in the unit and offers suggestions for at-home practice.

Unit 1: Business Letters

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are currently learning about business letters, and the writing skills needed to compose them. During this unit, your child will learn the importance of this type of writing as well as the capitalization and punctuation rules associated with this written form of communication. At the end of the unit, your child will complete a project that demonstrates his or her ability to communicate in writing. To extend your child's learning, any at-home practice you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Below are several activity suggestions.

- Think of a product you often purchase and enjoy using. Have your child write a letter to the company that makes the product stating the reasons your family likes the product.
- If your family has had a negative experience with a product or place of business, have your child write a letter stating the reasons for dissatisfaction.
- Give your child some legal-sized envelopes and have him or her practice addressing them to different businesses. Have your child write his or her return address on the envelopes.
- Read the "Letters to the Editor" section from your local newspaper with your child.
- Look through the mail for letters from companies or places of business. Select a few of these letters for your child to read. Encourage your child to highlight examples of capitalization and punctuation in the letters.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

3 Real-World Writing 1

ACTIVITY SHEETS

The reproducible activity sheets feature realistic graphic representations of the different writing formats covered in the unit. Simple directions ask the students to write required information on the form or direct them to use the format dictated by the writing type. Students will complete a variety of activities. Some of the activity sheets feature more than one type of activity.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Editing a Business Letter

Business letters are very similar to personal letters. One difference is that after the greeting you use a colon (:) instead of a comma. Another difference is that you include not only your address in the letter's heading, but also the address of the person or company you are writing.

DIRECTIONS: Look at the business letter below. Circle the ten mistakes in capitalization or punctuation.

1888 Road rd.
Cleveland OH 44113 November 20 2008

Candy's Sweet Chip Factory
2439 Route 15,
Fair worth TX, 76111

Dear Candy's Sweet Chip Factory:

I recently thought I'd give your Candy's Sweet Chips. They were the best chips I've ever eaten! I want you to know that I'd like to buy your chips in 40 stores in the States. I can't wait to try your Delicious Bits. Can they still be delicious?

Keep up the good work making these tasty treats!

Sincerely,
Mark Ruiz

DIRECTIONS: Circle the five mistakes on the envelope below.

mark Ruiz
1888 Road Rd.
Cleveland, OH 44113

Candy's Sweet Chip Factory
2439 Route 15,
Fair worth TX, 76111

8 Real-World Writing 1

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Each unit contains a list of ten suggested extension activities. After the students complete all the activity sheets in a lesson, they should each choose one extension activity to show that they have mastered the writing skills covered in the unit. The extension activities vary in difficulty level and appeal to many types of learners, making this section appropriate for students of differing abilities and interest levels. Some students may prefer to give an oral report or conduct an interview, while others might feel more comfortable writing an essay or making a poster.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Extension Activities

- If you were to start your own company, what would it be called? Use that name, and create a decorative letterhead for your company.
- Write a letter to your favorite store explaining what qualifies the store has that make you want to shop there.
- Write a letter to a store that you feel could make some improvements to get more customers.
- Get five envelopes and address one to each of the following local businesses: a grocery store, a movie theater, a bookstore, a bank, and a local newspaper office.
- Write a letter to a politician, such as a city council member, mayor, governor, or even the President. Explain what you think the important issues of the times are.
- Make a poster that shows the names and addresses of important local leaders you might write to express your feelings about issues. Leaders might include a school board member, a city council member, the mayor, or the congressman or congresswoman for your district.
- Look at the letters to the editor and the entire editorial page in your local newspaper. Choose a topic, and write a letter to the editor expressing your opinion about that issue.
- Find and write down the addresses of five different restaurants in a city you have visited. Write a letter to one of the places, and explain why you did or did not enjoy your experience there. Address an envelope to this restaurant. Display the list of addresses, your letter, and the envelope on a poster.
- Write a letter to a place you have been that you did not enjoy. Be sure to explain your specific concerns about your visit. Address an envelope to this place. Display your letter and the envelope on a poster.
- Write a letter to the food company that makes your favorite snack. Explain what you like about the company's product. Address an envelope to this company. Copy your letter and envelope. Mail the originals, and display the copies, along with any response, on a poster.

16 Real-World Writing 1



Introduction

UNIT ASSESSMENTS

Each unit in *Real-World Writing* includes a unit assessment with questions that focus on the writing skills covered in the unit. The assessments follow the same format as the activity sheets, including simple directions, questions, and sentences, as well as realistic sample items students must read and interpret. Students also complete the same types of activities they did on the activity sheets. These similarities help students recall information more easily and build their writing confidence.

ANSWER KEY

For your convenience, an answer key is included at the end of the binder, showing the correct solutions for each activity sheet and unit assessment. In cases where several answers could be correct, "Answers will vary" is noted.

Name: _____ Date: _____

 **Unit 1 Assessment**

Part 1
DIRECTIONS: Match the following examples to their correct labels.

1. February 12, 2005 **A.** signature
 2. Sincerely, **B.** opening
 3. Dear Shop and Stop: **C.** attention line
 4. *Angela Poyter* **D.** dateline
 5. Attention: Lead Teller **E.** closing

Part 2
DIRECTIONS: Rewrite the following parts of a business letter, and correct the capitalization and punctuation mistakes.

6. dear home improvement haven

7. sincerely yours

8. Huntsville tx

9. June 22 2005

10. 7500 hunter's ridge dr

 17 *Real-World Writing 1*

 **Answer Key**

PAGE 6
 1. today's date
 2. student's signature
 3. Answers will vary.
 4. colon (:)
 5. Answers will vary.

PAGE 7
 Answers will vary.

PAGE 8



PAGE 9
 Student's name February 25. Year will vary.
 1810 Brookshire Ave.
 Dallas, TX 75211
 Books, Books, Books
 6728 Brookside Ln.
 Atlanta, GA 30338
 Dear Books, Books, Books: (Text of letter will vary)
 Student's signature

PAGE 10
 Student's name April 24. Year will vary.
 2811 Broad Mountain Ave.
 Arlington, TX 76017
 The Enclave
 2231 Singleton Ln.
 Ft. Worth, TX 76111
 Attention: Restaurant Manager
 Dear Manager of The Enclave Restaurant:
 (Text of letter will vary.)
 Student's signature

PAGE 11
 Student's name Today's date
 8108 Lincoln Ave.
 Steamboat Springs, CO 80487
 El Jardin Restaurant
 6705 Briarhaven
 Denver, CO 80220
 Attention: Restaurant Manager
 Dear Manager of El Jardin Restaurant:
 (Text of letter will vary.)
 Student's signature

PAGE 12
 Student's name August 19. Year will vary.
 7 Harrison St.
 Seattle, WA 98199
 City Hall
 85 Junction Ave.
 Seattle, WA 98188
 Attention: Councilwoman Sylvia Santos
 Dear Ms. Santos: (Text of letter will vary.)
 Student's signature

 143 *Real-World Writing 1*