

Lesson Blueprints: Current Events

Lesson Title: Letter Writing

Grade Level: Middle and High School

Essential Question:

How do we best express thoughts on current events in a letter?

Objectives:

Students will....

1. Find a current event article that is relevant to topics being covered in class.
2. Connect classroom discussions and develop an opinion or response to the current event article.
3. Write a well-developed and factually-supported letter based on their opinion or response.

Materials:

- Newspapers and appropriate magazines for reference
- Internet for student research (students could also bring a current event to class)
- Art materials (paper, pencils, markers etc.) for lettering writing

Teacher:

1. This lesson emphasizes the student's ability to identify facts and details, make connections to classroom discussions, and then present their ideas in a logical manner.
2. Summarize recent classroom discussions with the class so students are clear on the current event topics they should be researching.
3. Give students time to find a current event article online or in one of the newspapers or magazines provided.
4. Once they have found one, or if they have located one prior to class, have them pair up and discuss their articles with each other.
5. Tell students they will be analyzing their current event article and making connections to topics being covered in class. They should develop an opinion or response to on the subject.
6. After making connections, students will write a letter to one of the following people that they think could benefit from learning about their article. The letter should include a well-supported opinion or response to the article and any other necessary information. Letter may include pictures, poetry, reference song lyrics, etc.:
 - A local news station
 - A friend or family member
 - A fictional character
 - A celebrity

Conclusion:

Have student pairs share their letters with another pair. Ask those who are comfortable to share with full group. Have students discuss the ways individuals expressed their thoughts on the current events in the letters shared by their partners.

Current Events: Letter Writing Rubric

Student: _____

	4	3	2	1	
CATEGORY	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaching Expectations	Below Expectations	Score
Current Event Article Choice	Chosen article is relevant and appropriate for current classroom topics and student grade level.	Chosen article is somewhat relevant and appropriate for current classroom topics and student grade level.	Chosen article is barely relevant and/ or appropriate for current classroom topics and student grade level.	Chosen article is not relevant and/ or appropriate for current classroom topics and student grade level.	
Information, style, audience, tone	Information is accurate and complete, creatively written and cleverly presented.	Information is well written and interesting to read.	Some information is provided but it limited or poorly presented.	Information is poorly written, inaccurate, or incomplete.	
Connections to current classroom topics	Connections are clear, well developed, and demonstrate full knowledge of content.	Connections are mostly clear, developed, and demonstrate somewhat an understanding of content.	Connections are present but unclear and do not demonstrate an understanding of content.	No connections to current classroom topics were made.	
Grammar, Punctuation and word choice	Excellent presentation, style, grammar, and punctuation all accurate.	Style, purpose, audience, grammar, and punctuation mostly accurate.	Information mislabeled or missing, inaccurate punctuation or grammar.	Grammar, punctuation, and choice of words are poor.	
					Total