



Webinar recording available  
<https://idra.news/ELAR3>

## From Journaling and Personal Narratives to Letter Writing – ELAR Webinar Part 3

Featuring Gerald Sharp & Jeanne Cantu

# Agenda

- Introduction by Dr. Nilka Avilés, Sr. Education Associate, IDRA
- Invitation to Write
- Changes Affecting Letter Writing
- Going from a Journal Entry into a Letter
- Characteristics of a Letter and Components of a Letter
- ELAR TEKS and the Writing Process
- Reading Connections
- Topics to Encourage Letter Writing
- Teacher Expectations
- Letter Writing Going Public
- Professional Resources

# Invitation to Write

**Begin a letter to a political figure registering a concern having to do with a coronavirus policy.**

**Timer set for 3 minutes**

# Changing Attitudes Affecting Letter Writing

- Takes too long to write and receive a reply
- Popularity of text messaging
- Popularity of emails



# Going From a Journal Idea into a Letter

- Thank you to a public figure for role in coronavirus response
- Expressing an opinion about some part of the coronavirus policy
- Registering a complaint about personal treatment during the pandemic
- Offering suggestions to improve public policy in pandemics
- Seeking information in order to recommend future changes
- Responding to Stay at Home ordinance
- Responding to restrictions for personal movement

# Characteristics of a Letter

- Form – Introduction, Body, Closing
- Maintains focus of why you are writing
- Reasons supporting opinions
- Authentic writing opportunity
- Addresses a particular person
- More formal voice

# Components of a Letter

- Date
- Address
- Salutation
- Body
- Closing
- Signature

# ELAR TEKS

**K-12 The student uses the writing process recursively to compose multiple texts...**

- K-12 The student is expected to plan by generating ideas for writing...; develop drafts...by organizing ideas...

**K-12 The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful...**

- 1 – dictate or compose correspondence such as thank you notes or letters
- 2-3 – compose correspondence such as thank you notes or letters
- 4-5 – compose correspondence that requests information
- 6-8 – compose correspondence that reflects an opinion, registers a complaint or requests information
- 9-12 – compose correspondence in a professional or friendly structure



# The Writing Process

- Prewriting (from topics found in journal entries)
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing

# Reading Connections

- *Can I Be Your Dog?* – Troy Cummings
- *Click, Clack, Moo, Cows that Type* – Doreen Cronin
- *The Day the Crayons Quit* – Drew Daywalt
- *Dear Mr. Blueberry* – Simon James    *Querido Salvatierra* – Simon James
- *Dear Mrs. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School* – Mark Teague
- *I Wanna Iguana* – Kren Kaufman Orloff
- *Old Henry* – Joan W. Blos
- *A Letter to My Teacher* – Deborah Hopkinson
- *Mango Moon* – Diane de Anda    *La luna mango* - Diane
- *Sincerely Yours, Writing Your Own Letter* – Nancy Loewen
- *Sitti's Secrets* – Naomi Shihab Nye
- *Yours Truly, Goldilocks* – Alma Flor Ada    *Atentamente, Ricitos de Oro*
- “Letter from Birmingham Jail” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Topics to Encourage Letter Writing

- Stay at home orders
- Wearing a face mask
- Social distancing
- Closing parks, movie theaters, restaurants
- Closing schools and churches
- Not allowing relatives in hospitals
- Stopping visits to nursing homes
- Lack of availability of COVID-19 testing in the community

# Teacher Expectations

- Through teacher videotaping:
  - Direct instruction – guiding students through unfamiliar genre
  - Teacher modeling
  - Think Alouds
- Students write in the first person
- Evaluation
  - Teacher-created rubrics
  - Level of support for ideas

# Letter Writing Going Public

- Dictating to family member
- Mailing letters
- Online messaging
- Communicating via email to public official

(Options cover various learning styles and preferences.)

# Professional Resources

*Acts of Teaching: How to Teach Writing*, Joyce Armstrong Carroll & Edward E. Wilson  
“An Introduction to Letter Writing,” [www.readingrockets.org/article/introduction-letter-writing](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/introduction-letter-writing)

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- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Smart Briefs
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); ELA Smart Briefs
- BBC – America
- New York Times
- National Public Radio (NPR)
- Texas Public Radio (TPR)





Poll:

**Have you gained knowledge  
in how to move from journal writing  
to letter writing?**

# Questions and Answers

**Thank you for participating in this webinar!**



# Closing Statements / Share Ideas

Share in the chat your successes and challenges with students writing letters.



## Intercultural Development Research Association

Celina Moreno, J.D., President & CEO  
5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101  
San Antonio, Texas 78228  
210-444-1710 • [contact@idra.org](mailto:contact@idra.org)

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