

Letter to Congressman Project

OBJECTIVE:

Students will demonstrate civic responsibility by writing a letter to a member of Congress about the issue of immigration.

GOALS:

WHST 9:1 Produce clear and coherent writing.

SS.IS 1 9-12 Address essential questions that reflect an enduring issue in the field.

SS. IS 6 9-12 Construct and evaluate explanations and arguments using multiple sources and relevant, verified information.

UNIT PROJECT:

You are to write a letter to a member of Congress stating your views on immigration.

You may write to the following Congressman:

- U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (Democrat)

Tips on writing your letter

Senators and Representatives pay attention to their mail (both regular and e-mail). It's good politics. Responding to mail is crucial to reelection. Members know your vote can be won or lost by their response. The most effective letter is a personal one, not a form letter. The letter should be short, informed and polite.

Some specific tips:

1. Try to stick to one page;
2. Be polite and concise. Refrain from making threats or ultimatums.
3. In a short paragraph, state your purpose.
4. Support your position with examples (evidence) in the rest of the letter.
5. Be factual and support your position with information about how the issue is likely to affect you and others. You can use the articles we read in class or you own research on the computer. Be sure to include the sources of your information (websites, articles, etc.)
6. Ask for something to be done about the issue and suggest something reasonable to be done.

Your Name

Address Fred Rodgers Magnet Academy
Springfield, IL **Zip Code** 157 N. Root St.
Aurora IL, 60505

Date

The Honorable *(name of congressman or senator)* of the <United States Senate> OR
<United States House of Representatives>

Dear Senator Dick Durbin:

I am... **(tell them who you are and where you're from)** I'm writing to you about
the issue of... **(what issue have we been studying)** and then **(State your
position on the issue, for or against)**

*(Next, use facts and details regarding your position/argument to show you have researched it. Use
textual information from the articles we read. Don't just list facts but weave them into the position
you've taken.) 5 sentences (2 pieces of textual evidence)*

Textual Evidence

1. _____

2. _____

Your Thoughts About the Textual Evidence

3. _____

4. _____

(Close by asking if they can do something about it and what you would like done) 2 sentences.

If you could... **(ask them to do something and tell them what they should do)**

Sincerely,

Your Name

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Your name

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1. Try to stick to **one typewritten page**; two pages at most. (If writing in longhand, take care to write legibly and don't write on the back of a page.)
2. In a short paragraph, state your purpose. Stick with one subject or issue. Support your position with the rest of the letter.
3. If the subject of your letter is a bill, cite it by name and number.
4. Be factual and support your position with information about how legislation is likely to affect you and others. Avoid emotional, philosophical arguments.
5. If you believe legislation is wrong and should be opposed, say so. Indicate the likely bad effects, and suggest a different approach.
6. Ask for the legislator's views, but do not demand support. Remember, Senators and Representatives respond to a variety of views, and even if they do not support you position on one issue or bill, they may support it the next time.
7. Currently, many legislators have e-mail capability, but can only respond by regular mail.

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4. Submit your letter to me through One Note. If you email the letter you need to CC (cmartinez@d131.org) if you want to send the letter see me for an envelope and you must also print the letter.

Your grade will be based on the following rubric:

Letter turned in on time One Note	5
Well-written	10
Factual information	15
Spelling and grammar	10
<u>Letter Format</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	50 points