

<p>Lesson 10B</p>	<p>Creating Authentic Texts: Letters of Application <i>Create an effective cover letter outlining experiences, education, and interests.</i></p>
<p>Relate</p>	<p>Introduce the lesson by asking students if they have ever applied for a job. Have students share how they obtained the position. For example: appropriate experiences, an exceptional interview, knew a fellow-employee. Ask students if they had to send in a letter of application or a resume. Discuss that individuals who hire for the workplace often do not meet an applicant until final interviews. Instead, the written word, in the form of application letters and resumes, present the applicant’s skills and experience.</p>
<p>Experience</p>	<p>Ask students what they would look for in a letter of application if they were the person hiring. Have students work in groups and identify the criteria for an effective business letter. Write their ideas on the board. Discuss that business letters or letters of application are used for many different purposes. Have students discuss other purposes for a letter of application. Highlight that many postsecondary institutions/colleges require a letter of application for entrance, as well as for scholarships. Share the handout <i>Cover Letter Suggestions</i> and highlight the important items.</p>
<p>Apply</p>	<p>Have students create a draft cover letter directed to a business in a field of their interest. You may wish to have students explore positions currently available in their area and use these advertisements as a basis of their writing. Have students use the handout <i>Template for a Cover Letter</i> as a guide for writing their letter of application.</p>
<p>Cooperate</p>	<p>Have students engage in a peer review session to compare different styles of letters, as well as to assist in individualized editing and revision. Have students decide who they would hire based on the application letters written.</p>
<p>Transfer</p>	<p>Discuss that many postsecondary institutions require that students write a letter of application. Have students identify the postsecondary institution that they wish to attend and the major/career that they wish to pursue. Share with students that writing a letter of admission to a college uses the same types of skills that they used when writing a letter of application for a job. Have students use these skills to write an application letter to the institution of their choice. As a group, discuss the positives of each letter, as well as sharing ideas on how to improve each letter.</p>

Cover Letter Suggestions

1. Your cover letter is a potential employer's first impression of you and can be the most vital part of the application packet. A well-written letter entices the employer to read your resume. A poorly constructed cover letter may doom your resume to the "No Need to Read" pile. The same can be said for a college or scholarship application that includes an introductory letter. It is important to highlight your skills, knowledge, and experience. Effective cover letters convey a sense of purpose and project enthusiasm. A form cover letter rarely does this. It's important to personalize each letter. Researching the employer, college, or scholarship prior to writing the cover letter will give you the opportunity to effectively personalize your letter.
2. Always include a cover letter when mailing your resume. A letter of introduction will prove useful when applying to colleges. It may act as the basis for a college essay, or it may be a useful addition to an application packet for the world of work.
3. Unless the advertisement specifies "no phone calls please," and the name is not provided in the advertisement, find out the name and the title of the individual who will be receiving your letter. Make sure that you spell the name properly and use the proper title (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.).
4. Use a proper business format for your letters. "Layout" means the overall look of your page – the right font, spacing, margins, and paper – all work together to create a professional image. Remember, if your document looks good, people will be more likely to read it.
5. Make sure that your letter is perfect. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are highly important. Have someone that you trust proofread the letter before it is sent.
6. Create the letter on a computer word processing program (Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, etc.) and use a quality printer. Use good quality paper. Cheap, flimsy paper makes your application seem very ordinary. Do not use flashy colors. A linen or light grey are acceptable colors for a business-like appearance.
7. Use a one-inch margin on all four sides of the document. This white space draws the reader to the body of the letter.
8. In the opening paragraph, tell the reader the purpose of the letter.
9. Use "I" statements and action verbs when describing your experience. Be specific.
10. Get to the point! Employers, as well as admission counselors, do not have the time to read lengthy letters. A cover letter should not exceed one page.
11. Focus on the specific skills and interests that you possess. Concentrate on skills which match the advertised qualifications for the job or the desired program of study. Stress what you can offer the company or college, not what you expect the company or college to offer you. A letter of application is your opportunity to sell yourself!
12. When writing a letter of application for a job, do not discuss salary expectations. If the advertisement requests that you include this type of information, provide a range rather than a specific amount.
13. End by thanking the reader and stating that you look forward to meeting with him/her. If applicable, add a statement about the next step in the process, such as: "I look forward to attending the orientation process for incoming students." Then, follow up to support your enthusiasm in being considered for admission to the college or the job for which you have applied.

Template for Cover Letter

Parts of a Cover Letter	Sample Letter Script
Heading	Your Mailing Address City, State Zip Code Today's Date (4 "Returns" or "Enters" on Keyboard)
Inside Address	Person's Name (Employer, Admission Counselor) Job Title Business/Institution Name Business/Institution Address City, State Zip Code
Salutation	Dear (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.)
Introductory Paragraph	Tell the reader why you are writing.
First Main Paragraph	Describe your qualifications. In this paragraph, sell your skills and knowledge. Share specifics about why you are interested in the company or the college. Point out any related experiences that you have.
Second/Additional Main Paragraphs	Continue to describe your qualifications. Highlight relevant training or classes that relate to the job or to the major for which you are applying.
Closing Paragraph	Close by thanking the reader and requesting an interview or appointment.
Complimentary Close	Sincerely,
Signature	4 "Returns" or "Enters" on the keyboard. Write your name in cursive.
Name	Type your name.
Enclosure	Type the word "Enclosure" at the bottom of the page, left justified. This indicates that you have enclosed other items, such as a resume or transcripts, for the reader to see.