



FOUNDATION SKILLS

PATHWAY: All Pathways
COURSE: All CTAE Courses
UNIT 3.2: Writing Business Letters



INTRODUCTION

Annotation:

This lesson is directed towards all CTAE students and is designed to provide instruction in basic business letter writing skills. Although the modern business environment has become increasingly more informal, business letters are still an important aspect of the business process. Following this lesson, students should be able to construct a standard written business correspondence and formulate and organize their ideas in a cohesive, logical manner.

Grade(s):

X	9 th
X	10 th
X	11 th
X	12 th

Time: One 50-minute class period

Author: Alyson Pittman and Dr. Frank Flanders

Students with Disabilities:

For students with disabilities, the instructor should refer to the student's IEP to be sure that the accommodations specified are being provided. Instructors should also familiarize themselves with the provisions of Behavior Intervention Plans that may be part of a student's IEP. Frequent consultation with a student's special education instructor will be beneficial in providing appropriate differentiation.



FOCUS STANDARDS

GPS Focus Standards:

CTAE – FS – 3 Communications: Learners use various communication skills in expressing and interpreting information.

GPS Academic Standards:

ELA10W1 - The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure.

National / Local Standards / Industry / ISTE:



UNDERSTANDINGS & GOALS

Enduring Understandings:

Students will understand that writing a formal business letter, in the appropriate format, is a necessary component of customer relations and that effective customer communication is an important part of successful business practices. Formal business communication is an important skill for all individuals to possess, and students should recognize that written comments are more powerful and substantive than verbal messages, especially from a legal standpoint.

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to develop skills in writing business letters?
- Why is written business correspondence important to the modern business environment?
- Why is it important to use proper grammar, spelling, and word choice in a business letter?

Knowledge from this Unit:

- Students will be able to identify and label the parts of the block style business letter.
- Students will be able to explain the importance of business letter writing skills.

Skills from this Unit:

- Students will analyze a customer service situation and respond by writing a business letter in the appropriate format.
- Students will edit the writing of others for grammar, spelling, and other errors.
- Students will be able to organize and convey their thoughts in a clear, concise, and coherent manner.



ASSESSMENT(S)

Assessment Method Type:

- Pre-test
- Objective assessment - multiple-choice, true- false, etc.
- Quizzes/Tests
- Unit test
- Group project
- Individual project
- Self-assessment - May include practice quizzes, games, simulations, checklists, etc.
 - Self-check rubrics
 - Self-check during writing/planning process
 - Journal reflections on concepts, personal experiences and impact on one's life
 - Reflect on evaluations of work from teachers, business partners, and competition judges
 - Academic prompts
 - Practice quizzes/tests
- Subjective assessment/Informal observations
 - Essay tests
 - Observe students working with partners
 - Observe students role playing
- Peer-assessment
 - Peer editing & commentary of products/projects/presentations using rubrics
 - Peer editing and/or critiquing
- Dialogue and Discussion
 - Student/teacher conferences
 - Partner and small group discussions
 - Whole group discussions
 - Interaction with/feedback from community members/speakers and business partners
- Constructed Responses
 - Chart good reading/writing/listening/speaking habits
 - Application of skills to real-life situations/scenarios
- Post-test

Assessment(s) Title:

- Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter
- Editing a Business Letter Quiz
- Editing a Business Letter Interactive Activity

Assessment(s) Description/Directions:

Following instruction, give the students a copy of the quiz entitled "Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter." Explain to the students that they are to fill in the appropriate blanks identifying each part of the example letter.

Following instruction, give the students a copy of the quiz entitled "Editing a Business Letter." Explain to the students that they are to use editing marks to correct any misspelled words, grammar mistakes, punctuation mistakes, and incorrect block style formatting.

Attachments for Assessment(s):

- Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter Quiz and Answer Key
- Editing a Business Letter Quiz and Answer Key



LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Sequence of Instruction

1. Identify the Standards. Standards should be posted in the classroom for each lesson.
CTAE – FS – 3 Communications: Learners use various communication skills in expressing and interpreting information.
ELA10W1 - The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure.
2. Review Essential Questions.
 - Why is it important to develop skills in writing business letters?
 - Why is written business correspondence important to the modern business environment?
 - Why is it important to use proper grammar, spelling, and word choice in a business letter?
3. Identify and review the unit vocabulary.
 - Business letter
 - Recipient's Name
 - Salutation
 - Body
 - Closing of the letter
 - Sender's name
 - Left justified
 - Rough draft
 - Final draft
4. The importance of a business letter.
 - Ask students if they've ever written a personal letter or a business letter. Ask them to describe the format they used.
 - Ask the students to identify possible writers and recipients of business letters. Sample answers may include customers, employees, employers, potential employers, and retailers.
 - Explain to the students that business letter writing is a common method of communication between groups of people within a business transaction. Business letters are a formal, appropriate way to contact current or potential employers, respond to a customer's complaints, voice complaints over the effectiveness or operation of a product, or any other type of business communication.
5. Legal Arguments.
 - Ask the students, "Have you ever watched a courtroom TV program or seen a movie or television show with a courtroom scene in it? What is one thing the judge or the attorneys always ask for?" Sample answers may be evidence, paperwork, or legal documents.
 - Explain to the students that every legal proceeding requires some type of written statement, legal documents, written evidence or paperwork, which often includes letters. The written word carries a very high degree of legal weight and power.

6. How to write a business letter.

- Before the students begin to write their letters, explain that there are two key questions that should shape their writing.
 - The first question is “*Why* are you writing?” This question will define the purpose of your letter and help make sure your letter accomplishes its purpose.
 - The second question is “*Who* is your audience?” By asking this question, you will be able to tailor your letter to the appropriate audience and address any concerns or questions that may be specific to the recipient of the letter.
- Explain to the students that the most widely accepted format for writing a business letter is the block style format. This section will cover the appropriate order and parts of the block style format.
- Beginning two inches below the top of the page, write or type a **return address** followed by the date in this format: Month Date, Year (ex. December 12, 2011).
- Press “Enter” four times and write or type the **recipient’s name and full mailing address**. This should take three or more lines.
- Press “Enter” twice and write or type the **salutation**. For a business letter, the salutation should read something like this:
Dear Mr. _____:
Using first names without proper address is considered inappropriate for a formal business letter.
- Press “Enter” twice and begin typing the **body** of the letter. Paragraphs should be single spaced.
- Press “Enter” twice between paragraphs.
- When the body of the letter is complete, press “Enter” twice and type or write the closing of the letter. The closing should be simple, formal, and polite. For example “Sincerely” or “With regards” are two good phrases for closing a formal business letter.
- Press “Enter” four times and type or write the **sender’s name**. In the space above the sender’s name, the sender should sign the letter using blue or black ink.
- All lines of the letter should be **left justified** on the page.

7. Writing a Rough Draft.

- Have students write a **rough draft** in pencil before writing the **final draft** in pen. Remind the students to always check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes in the rough draft of their letter.

8. Administer the quiz entitled “Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter.”

9. Editing a Business Letter.

- Explain to the students that editing is an important part of the business letter writing process. Mistakes are easily made, and editing helps the letter writer catch those mistakes before sending the letter.
- Give the students the quiz entitled “Editing a Business Letter.” You may choose to give the students only one quiz or both quizzes provided in this unit (Editing a Business Letter and Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter.)
- “Optional Interactive” Business Letter Editing Activity” or Print out “Business Letter Editing Activity.” Have students complete the interactive activity and print off their comments and letter rankings for grading, or use the Word file as a homework activity.

Attachments for Learning Experiences:

- Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter
- Editing a Business Letter
- Identifying the Parts of a Business Letter Quiz and Answer Key
- Editing a Business Letter Quiz and Answer Key
- Business Letter Writing Activity and Edited Answer Key
- Business Letter Editing Activity

Notes & Reflections:

CULMINATING PERFORMANCE TASK

Culminating Unit Performance Task Title:

Business Letter Writing Activity
OR
Real Business Letter Exercise

Culminating Unit Performance Task Description/Directions/Differentiated Instruction:

- Business Letter Writing Activity: Review the materials provided. Students will then compose a formal business letter in appropriate block style format in response to the situation. Use the rubric below to explain what you are looking for in the letter. You may give the students a copy of the rubric prior to the assignment.
- Have students write one to three business letters addressed to real people. The letters must be typed or word-processed and an envelope completed for each. (Teacher will provide envelopes and stamps). At least one of the letters should be a letter of request (student must request something i.e. an application, information, catalog, etc).

Rubric for Writing Business Letters:

Criteria	8-10 Excellent	4-7 Satisfactory	1-3 Unsatisfactory
Customer Relations	The letter is written in an overall positive tone that focuses entirely on the customer. The purpose of the letter is clear and readily identifiable.	The letter uses some negative words, but the focus is placed on the customer. The purpose of the letter is somewhat unclear.	The letter is written in an overall negative tone that focuses only on the writer. The purpose of the letter is not addressed.
Business Letter Format	All components of the letter are present and in order. The letter follows block-style format.	All the components of the letter are present, but a few are out of order. For the most part, the letter follows block-style format.	The components of the letter are out of order or absent, and the letter does not follow block-style format.
Content Organization	The content of the letter is organized, clear, and concise. Multiple paragraphs are present with strong topic sentences. The letter is conversational and appropriate.	Multiple paragraphs are present, but topic sentences are somewhat weak. The sentences are clear but disorganized.	The content of the letter is incoherent and does not follow a logical order. There is only one paragraph with a weak topic sentence, and the sentences are unclear.
Purpose and Technical Information	The letter achieves its purpose in simple, clear language that is easily understood.	The letter achieves its purpose, but information is somewhat unclear.	The letter does not achieve its purpose. Information provided is unclear and difficult to understand.
Grammar/ Punctuation	Letter is almost completely free of grammatical errors and misspelled words.	Letter contains between 1 and 5 major grammar and punctuation mistakes.	Letter contains more than five major grammar and punctuation mistakes.

Attachments for Culminating Performance Task:

Business Letter Writing Activity
Rubric for Writing Business Letters



UNIT RESOURCES

Web Resources:

Attachment(s):

Materials & Equipment:

What 21st Century Technology was used in this unit:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Slide Show Software	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graphing Software	<input type="checkbox"/>	Audio File(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interactive Whiteboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calculator	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graphic Organizer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Response System	<input type="checkbox"/>	Desktop Publishing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Image File(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Web Design Software	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video
<input type="checkbox"/>	Animation Software	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wiki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Electronic Game or Puzzle Maker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	Website		