



Life Comparisons through Letters

Goal

Students will gain an understanding of the lives of students in South Africa through written letters and photographs.

Objectives

Upon completion of these lessons, students will be able to:

1. Complete a group letter about themselves and a description of their community.
2. Revise and edit the letter before sending.
3. Compare their lives to the lives of students in South Africa.

Subject Areas

Writing

WI Standards

Writing: B.4.1, B.4.2, B.4.3

Materials Needed

Computer, chart paper, markers

Introduction

Students will have had experience writing in a personal letter format by the time this lesson is conducted in January.

Lesson Procedure

1. Introduce the idea of communicating with a class in South Africa. Locate the country on a globe and connect it to information already shared in class. Discuss their ideas of communities, environment, schools and people who live there.

2. Ask students to brainstorm ideas that they think students in South Africa would like to know about us. Have them record ideas in small groups and then compile them on chart paper.
3. Discuss why we will be using email rather than regular mail for this communication.
4. Review personal letter format – date, greeting, message, closing
5. With the list of ideas nearby, have students suggest sentences to include in our letter. Deliberately make mistakes and write the sentences verbatim on the computer screen.
6. Print copies of the letter and ask the students to use the writing lessons that we've learned so far to revise and edit the writing. They may work in partners for this.
7. Regroup and take suggestions from students on how to make our letter even better.
8. Once the letter is complete, copy the final draft into an email document and attach relevant pictures.
9. When a reply is received, discuss with students the similarities and differences that they notice between the two classes.

Assessment Ideas

- 🌐 Collect student revisions of the letters to assess writing skills
- 🌐 Journal entry about their feelings about the comparisons made between schools

Adaptations

- 🌐 Give students the option to revise and edit the letter on their own, or to completely rewrite a final draft.
- 🌐 Have students suggest pictures that would be interesting to send and then have them take the picture using the digital camera.