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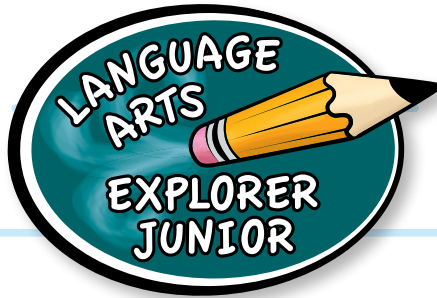
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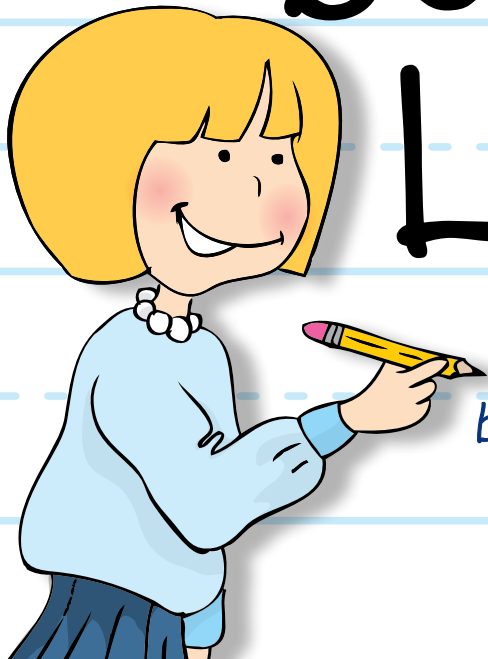
How to Write a Business Letter

by Cecilia Minden
and Kate Roth

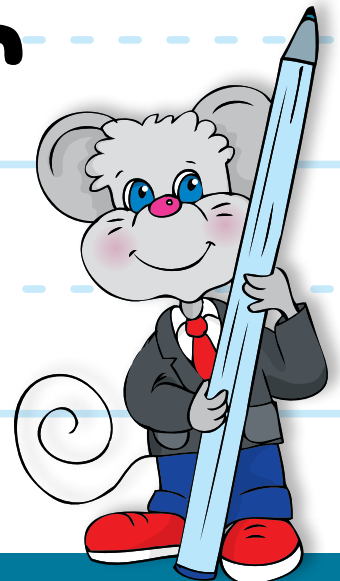




How to Write a Business Letter



by Cecilia Minden
and Kate Roth





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Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Doing Business. 4

CHAPTER TWO

What Do You Think? 8

CHAPTER THREE

From Me to You. 10

CHAPTER FOUR

Dear Sir or Madam 12

CHAPTER FIVE

I Wanted You to Know 14

CHAPTER SIX

Sincerely 17

CHAPTER SEVEN

In the Mail. 19

Glossary 22

For More Information 23

Index 24

About the Authors 24

Doing Business

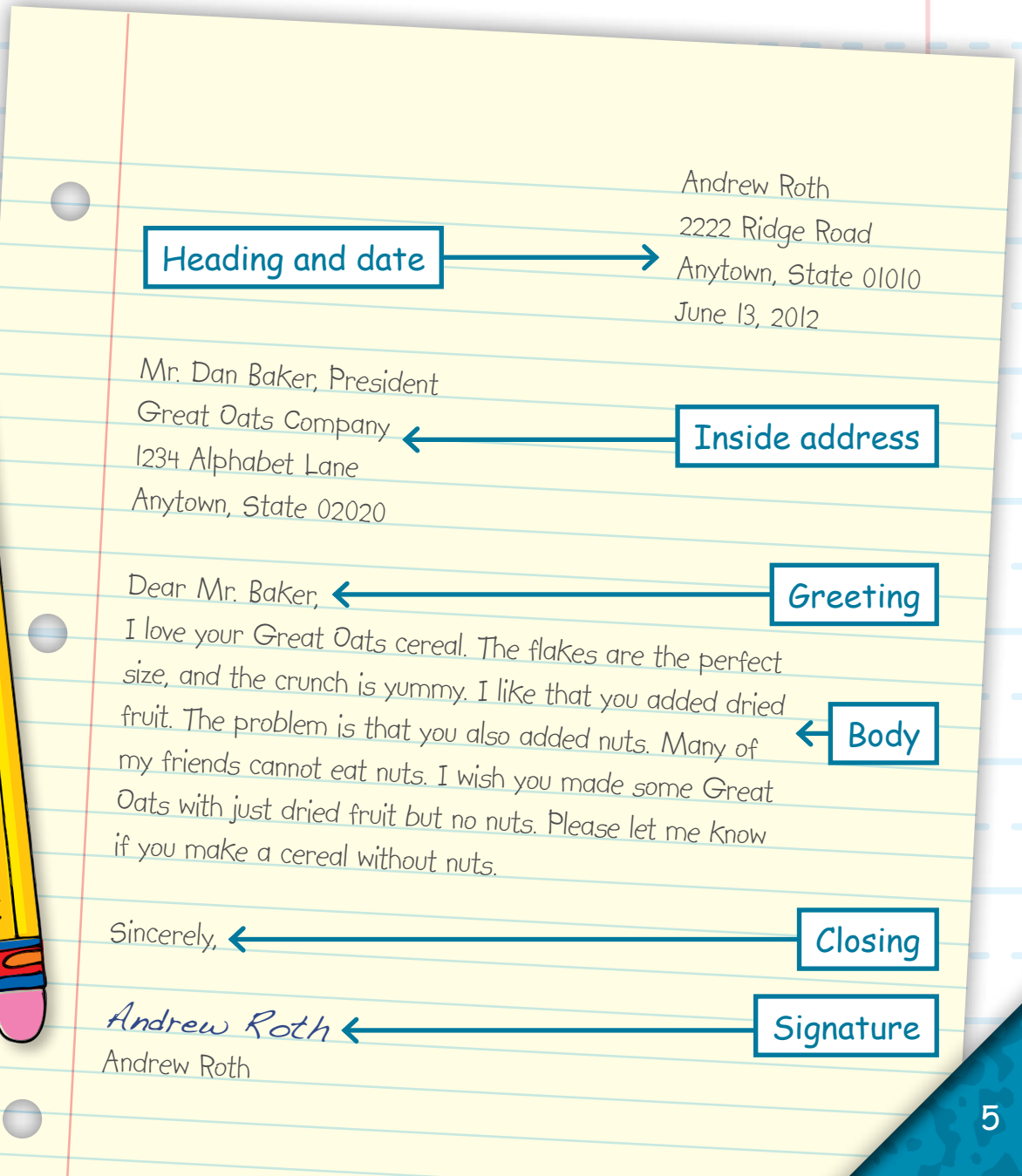
Think of a **product** you like. A product is something that is made or sold. For example, maybe your favorite cereal is Great Oats. You want to tell the **business** that makes Great Oats how much you like their cereal. Everyone likes to hear they are doing a good job. You can write the company a business letter!

A business letter has six main parts:

1. **Heading** and date (letter writer's name and address and the date)
2. Inside address (name of the person you're writing to, his/her job title, name of the business, address)
3. **Greeting** (the words that begin the letter)
4. **Body** (the main part of the letter)

5. **Closing** (the words that end a letter)

6. **Signature** (the letter writer's first and last name, both printed and written by hand)



Writing a business letter is different from writing a letter to a friend. **Stationery** is paper used for letters. Business letters are written on plain white stationery. They are mailed in plain white **envelopes**.

Always make a **draft** of your letter. You can then copy it onto the stationery.

Plain white stationery makes your letter look professional.



You will only need a few supplies to write your letter.



Here is what you will need to complete the activities in this book:

- Blank notebook paper
- Plain white stationery and an envelope
- Stamp
- Pencil with an eraser
- Pen with blue or black ink
- A computer (optional)

What Do You Think?



You could write a letter to the makers of your favorite video game.

You can write to a business to let its employees know what you like or don't like. You can also write to ask questions. For example, Tom likes a certain computer game. He wants to know if there are other games like it. He needs to find out who makes the game and then write the company a business letter.

To get a copy of this activity, visit
www.cherrylakepublishing.com/activities.

ACTIVITY



Choose Your Topic

In this activity you will choose the topic for your letter.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make a list of products you might write about in a business letter.
2. Include products that you use often and strongly like or dislike.
3. Include products about which you have a question.
4. Choose one product for the topic of your letter.

- CarZ computer game—
What other games are like it?

- Kenzie Backpack—
Where can I buy it?

- Play Life toys—
These toys have great themes,
but the figures all look the same.

Ask a librarian to help you find the name of the business that makes the product you are writing about in your letter.

From Me to You



Companies are more likely to take your letter seriously if it is written in the proper format.

A business letter begins with a heading. The heading is the writer's name and address and today's date. It lets the business know where to send an answer to your letter. Write your name and address in the upper right-hand corner of your draft paper. Below the address, write the date you are sending the letter.

ACTIVITY



Heading and Date

In this activity you will write the heading and the date on your draft.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. On a blank sheet of paper, write your heading in the upper right-hand corner.
2. Write your name on the first line.
3. Write your street address on the second line.
4. Write your city, state, and zip code on the third line.
5. Write today's date below your address on the fourth line.

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Spell out the name of the month. For example, write February 10, 2012, not 2/10/12.

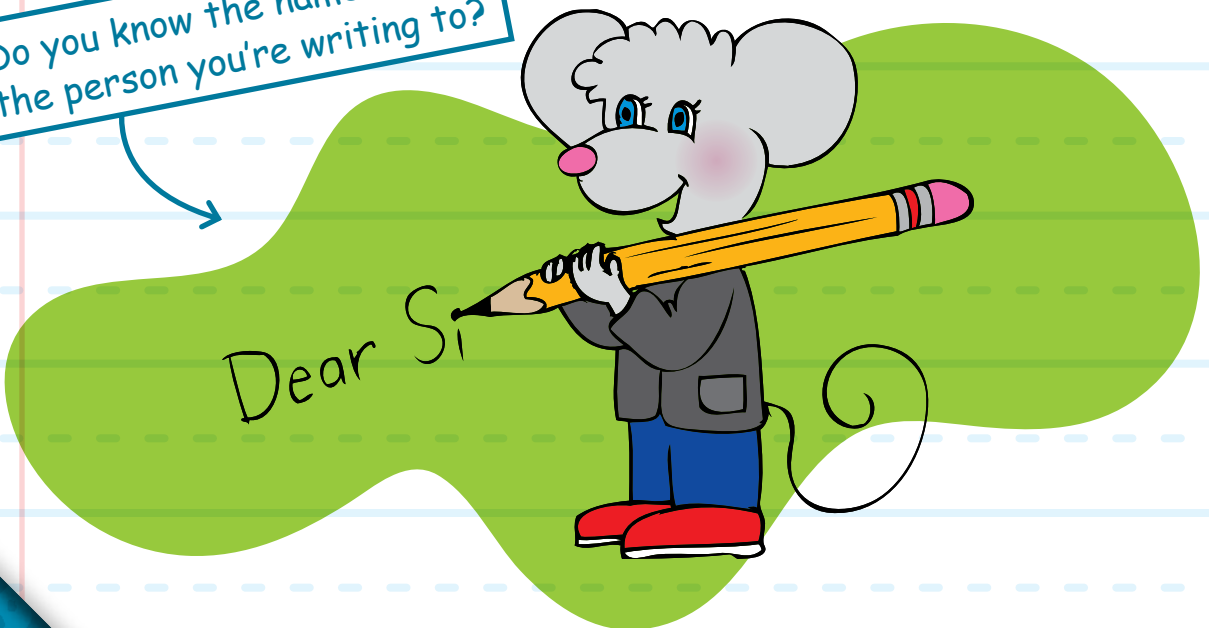
Annabel Roth
88 Wood Lane
Anytown, State 01010
September 25, 2012

Dear Sir or Madam

Next, write the inside address. This is the name and address of the business. Are you writing to a specific person? Be sure to include that person's title. For example: *Mr. Dan Baker, President.*

Write the greeting below the address. For example: *Dear Mr. Baker.* If you do not know who will read the letter, then write *Dear Sir or Madam.*

Do you know the name of the person you're writing to?



ACTIVITY



Inside Address and Greeting

In this activity you will write the inside address and the greeting on your draft.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Leave some space between the heading and the inside address.
2. Write the inside address. This is the name and address of the business.
3. Write the person's name and title on the first line.
4. Write his or her address below the name.
5. Write the greeting Dear Sir or Madam or the person's name.

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Best Toy Company
2 Toy Avenue
Anytown, State 01010

Dear Sir or Madam,

Annabel Roth
88 Wood Lane
Anytown, State 01010
September 25, 2012

To Whom It May
Concern can also be
used as a greeting
when you aren't sure
who will read your
letter.

I Wanted You to Know

If you are writing to a video game company, you might want to take notes on your favorite parts of the game.



What would you like the company to know? Try to think of three things. First, let them know what you think about their product. Next, let them know why you are writing. Finally, let them know what you want them to do.

For example, Tom might begin by writing about how much he likes the video game CarZ. He could tell the company that he likes to play the game with his friends. Next, he would write his question, asking if there are other games like CarZ. Finally, Tom would ask the business to write and let him know where he could buy the other games.

ACTIVITY



Body of the Letter

In this activity, you will write the message of your letter.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Begin by writing what you think of the product.
2. Next, explain why you are writing. Do you have a question to ask? Are you writing to report that the product is great or not so great?
3. Finally, write what you want the business to do.

Activity continued on page 16.

Activity continued from page 15.

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Annabel Roth
88 Wood Lane
Anytown, State 01010
September 25, 2012

Best Toy Company
2 Toy Avenue
Anytown, State 01010

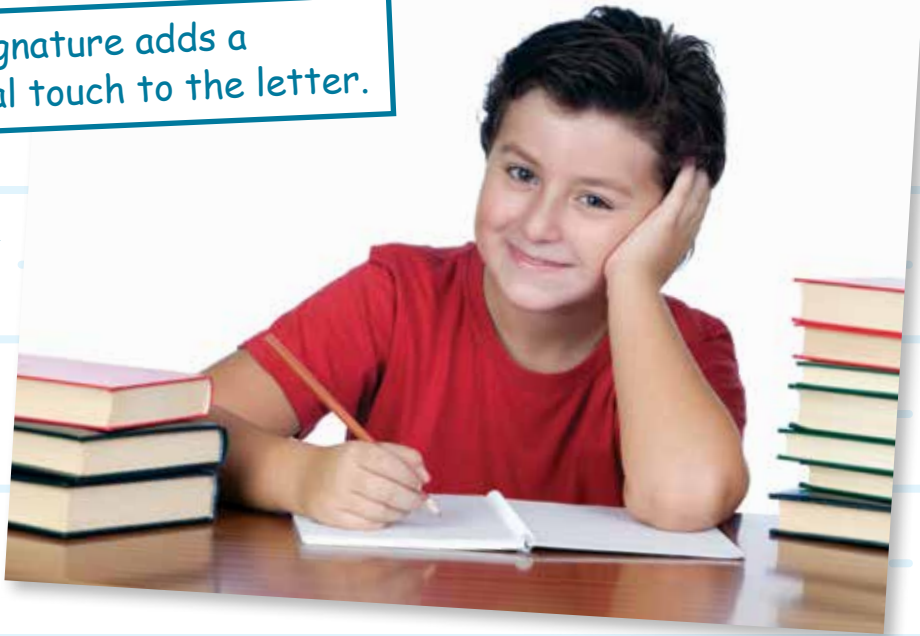
Dear Sir or Madam,

All the kids in my family love to play with Play Life toys. Each set has a great theme, such as farm and pirates. I like that there are so many small parts for each theme. Your toy is fun for boys and girls.

I think there is one problem with your toy. All of the play figures in your sets have brown eyes and a brown mouth. I wish you made people with different color eyes. I think more mouths should be red. I hope you will consider adding different play figures when you create new sets.

Sincerely

Your signature adds a personal touch to the letter.



The end of the letter is called the closing. Most business letters end with *Sincerely* or *Yours truly*. Leave a space below the closing and print your full name. Then sign your name above your printed name. Why write it two times? One is your signature, so the business knows you wrote the letter. The printed name below makes sure your name is clearly written.

there are so many smiling
for boys and girls.

I think there is one problem with your toy. All of the play figures in your sets have brown eyes and a brown mouth. I wish you made people with different color eyes. I think more mouths should be red. I hope you will consider adding different play figures when you create new sets.

Appreciatively,

Andrew Roth

Andrew Roth

Always use an ink pen to sign your business letters.

ACTIVITY

Closing and Signature

In this activity you will finish the draft of your letter.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose a closing for your letter. Here are some sample closings for a business letter:
 - Sincerely
 - Yours truly
 - Appreciatively
2. Put a comma at the end of the closing.
3. Sign your first and last name below the closing.
4. Print your first and last name below the signature.

To get a copy of this activity, visit
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In the Mail



After you finish your draft, check your spelling. When the letter is just right, copy it to the white stationery. Be sure to use your best handwriting! Address an envelope by writing your address in the upper left-hand corner of the envelope. Write the business address in the middle of the envelope. Don't forget to add a stamp!

To get a copy of this activity, visit
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ACTIVITY

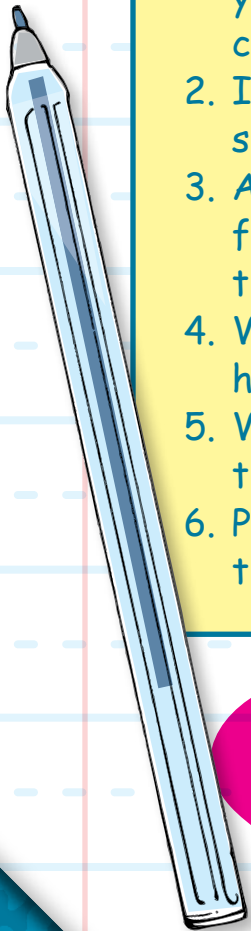


Writing the Final Copy and Addressing an Envelope

In this activity you will write the final copy and address the envelope.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Copy your letter onto the white stationery in your neatest handwriting. You can also use a computer to type your final letter.
2. If you use a computer, print out your letter and sign your name by hand.
3. Address the envelope. Be sure to write on the front of the envelope. The **seal flap** should be at the top of the back side.
4. Write your name and address in the upper left-hand corner of the envelope.
5. Write the name and address of the business in the center of the envelope.
6. Put a stamp in the upper right-hand corner of the envelope.



Annabel Roth
88 Wood Lane
Anytown, State 01010



Best Toy Company
2 Toy Avenue
Anytown, State 01010



To get a copy of this activity, visit
www.cherrylakepublishing.com/activities.

ACTIVITY



Final Changes

Read the instructions carefully. Check everything one more time.

- YES NO Do I start my letter with a heading and today's date?
- YES NO Do I include an inside address?
- YES NO Do I include a greeting?
- YES NO Do I include a closing and signature?
- YES NO Do I address the envelope correctly?
- YES NO Do I remember to put a stamp on the envelope?

Now you can wait for the business to write you back. While you are waiting, you can try writing to more companies. What other businesses will receive your letters?

Glossary

body (BAH-dee) the main part of a letter

business (BIZ-niss) an organization that makes, buys, or sells something to make money

closing (KLOH-zing) the words that end a letter

draft (DRAFT) a first version of a document, or one that is not final

envelopes (ON-vuh-lohpss) flat paper coverings that are used to mail letters

greeting (GREE-ting) the opening words of a letter, such as "Dear Sir"

heading (HED-ing) the writer's name, address, and date written at the top of a business letter

product (PRAH-dukt) something that is created, made, or produced

seal flap (SEEL FLAP) the part of an envelope that folds down to close it

signature (SIG-nuh-chur) a person's name signed by hand

stationery (STAY-shuh-ner-ee) special paper used for letter writing

For More Information

BOOK

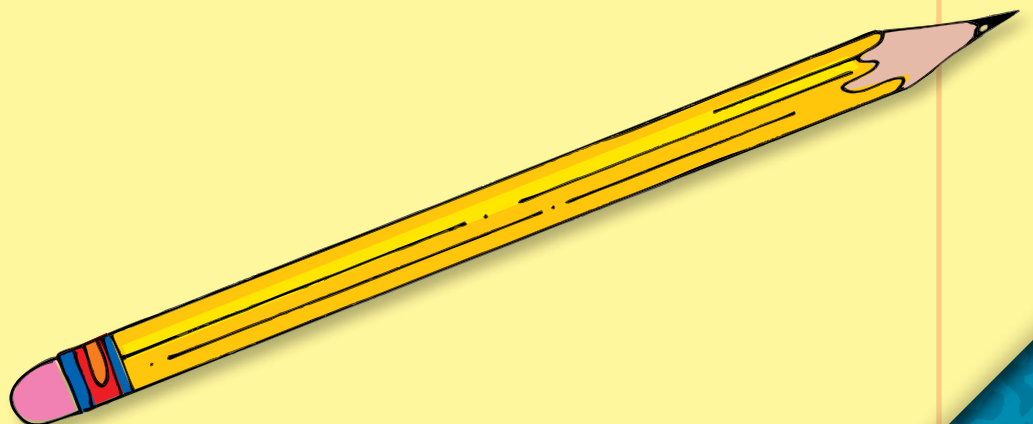
Loewen, Nancy. *Sincerely Yours: Writing Your Own Letter*.
Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2009.

WEB SITE

International Reading Association—Read Write Think

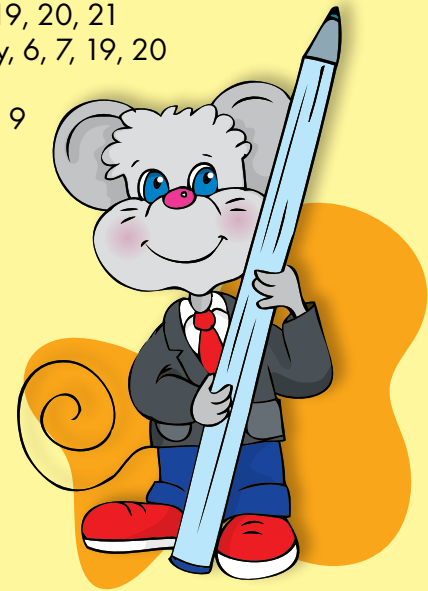
www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/letter-generator-30005.html

Generate your own letters with this handy guide.



Index

- addresses, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21
- body, 4, 5, 14-15, 15-16
- closings, 5, 17, 18, 21
- dates, 4, 5, 10, 11, 21
- drafts, 6, 10, 11, 13, 18
- envelopes, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21
- greetings, 4, 5, 12, 13, 21
- handwriting, 19, 20
- headings, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 21
- inside addresses, 4, 5, 12, 13, 21
- job titles, 4, 12, 13
- messages, 14-15, 15-16
- names, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20
- products, 4, 8, 9, 14-15
- questions, 8, 9, 15
- seal flaps, 20
- signatures, 5, 17, 18, 20, 21
- spelling, 11, 19
- stamps, 19, 20, 21
- stationery, 6, 7, 19, 20
- topics, 8, 9



About the Authors

Cecilia Minden, PhD, is the former director of the Language and Literacy Program at Harvard Graduate School of Education. She earned her doctorate from the University of Virginia. While at Harvard, Dr. Minden also taught several writing courses. Her research focused on early literacy skills and developing phonics curricula. She is now an educational consultant and the author of more than 100 books for children. Dr. Minden lives with her family in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She likes to write early in the morning while the house is still quiet.

Kate Roth has a doctorate from Harvard University in language and literacy and a master's from Columbia University Teachers College in curriculum and teaching. Her work focuses on writing instruction in the primary grades. She has taught first grade, kindergarten, and Reading Recovery. She has also instructed hundreds of teachers from around the world in early literacy practices. She lives in Shanghai, China, with her husband and three children, ages 3, 7, and 10. Her oldest two children, Annabel and Andrew, wrote the letters used in this book.



Writing is an important skill that you use almost every day. You use it in school, with friends, at home—almost anywhere! Whether you're working on a school report or journaling about your day, the Language Arts Explorer Junior writing series has tips and tricks that will start you on your way to becoming a writing expert!

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| How to Write an E-mail | How to Write a Poem |
| How to Write an Essay | How to Write a Report |
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| How to Write a How-To | How to Write and Give a Speech |
| How to Write an Interview | How to Write a Thank-You Letter |



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