

DEAR MR. WRIGHT

GRADE: 3-4

TIME: Three 30-minute sessions

If an architect could design a structure for your favorite stuffed animal or toy, what would it look like? In this lesson, students will write a letter to Frank Lloyd Wright, the pioneering American architect, and ask him to do just that. Students will think creatively about building a structure and understand the roles of people living and/or working on their structure. Students will also have the opportunity to focus on letter-writing skills.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Visual Arts, Social-Emotional Learning, Social Studies, Language Arts

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Projector and laptop (or individual screens for students) with internet connection

Lined paper or printed letter template (see below)

Pencils or pens

Stamps

Envelopes

1. Understand the roles of people involved in the design and construction process.
2. Communicate ideas in a clear manner.
3. Work with other students in a group setting.
4. Learn letter writing etiquette.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the roles of the client, architect, and other professionals involved in home construction?
2. What information would a client share with an architect in order to get the house they desired?
3. What are the elements of a house?
4. How do you write a formal letter?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

Session One

- **Explain to the students the various roles of people involved with constructing a house. We recommend this list. If possible, give examples of the work each role does and show pictures.**
 - ◇ **Architect** – creates a floor plan, decides how the building will be positioned on the site and chooses the locations of rooms, walls, windows, doors, outdoor space, etc.
 - ◇ **Interior Designer** – designs or selects furniture, flooring, wallpaper, etc.
 - ◇ **Other** - consider additional jobs such as construction manager, engineer, and electrician.
- **Lead students in a discussion about these various jobs. Ask the students the following questions:**
 - ◇ What would it be like to work in one of these fields?
 - ◇ Would you like to have one of these jobs when you grow up? Why or why not?
 - ◇ What would be some fun/challenging parts of these jobs?
- **For homework, tell the students to bring in a “friend” for the next class (such as a toy, stuffed animal, action figure, picture of a pet, etc.).**

ENGAGE

Session Two

- **In small groups, have students get into groups of 2-3 and discuss the following questions.**
 - ◇ Who did you bring in?
 - ◇ Why do you choose this “friend”?
 - ◇ What is your “friend’s” personality?
- **Facilitate a class discussion. Write down ideas the children have of the different requirements the characters would need in their personalized home on a whiteboard or other surface visible to all. Help them specifically consider what the professionals involved in building add to a house.**
 - ◇ Where does this character live now?
 - ◇ What space would this “friend” want to live in?
 - ◇ What rooms/objects would be important for their “friend”?
 - ◇ What is the environment their “friend” would thrive in?

EXPLORE

Session Three

- **Give each student a letter writing template and briefly go through the components of a letter.**
 - ◇ **Introduction**
 - ◇ **Greeting**
 - ◇ **Main point**
 - ◇ **Explain further**
 - ◇ **Closing statement**
 - ◇ **Thank you**
 - ◇ **Sign off**

ENGAGE

Session Three

- **Have each student write a letter to Frank Lloyd Wright as a client asking for him to design a home for their “friend.” Make the list of notes from the last session visible to all students in case they need ideas. Walk around and assist where it is needed.**

LESSON PROCEDURE

ENGAGE

Session Three

- **Once the letters are written, demonstrate how to address an envelope. Then, have the students address an envelope with their school's return address and the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust address:**
Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio
c/o Education Department
931 Chicago Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60302
- **Show students where to place a stamp on the envelope. Then, have students fold up their letters, put them in the envelope, and seal and stamp the envelope.**
- **Optional: drop off the letters at the post office together!**

