

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?!

TIPS FOR WRITING TO OLDER ADULTS YOU HAVEN'T MET

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **Start with "Dear Friend".** Even if you don't know your reader by name, starting with "Dear Friend" will make them feel special and cared for.
- **Write it by hand.** This gives your message a personal touch – no one has your handwriting but you!
- **Make it neat and write slightly larger than you normally would.** Make sure your recipient can read the wonderful words you write them!
- **Don't write the date.** It may take longer than normal for this letter to be delivered, so leaving off the date will help your reader feel special even if there is a delay in receiving it.
- Sign your card or letter with your first name so your reader knows it's coming from a "real" person: YOU!
- Your letter doesn't need to be long – one page should be more than enough. Even a quick note makes someone's day brighter! Remember, letters can be re-read over and over again.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- Try to write in a way so that anyone who receives your letter will feel that it is meant especially for them.
- Introduce yourself. You can share your age or grade level, what town you live in, or who else is in your family.
- Describe activities you especially like or something fun you recently did with your family or friends.

BE CREATIVE

- Use your creativity, imagination, and talents to make your letter fun and unique!
- Draw a picture, decorate your note with bright colors or add other personal touches.
- Include a joke, poem, or quote.



BE KIND AND THOUGHTFUL

- You want your letter to be personal, but not all about you!
- Remember that writing a letter is an act of generosity and kindness.
- Write a wish you have for your reader, or words of encouragement. Let them know that they matter and that someone is thinking of them.

Avoid religion, politics, and personal views. Since we don't know exactly who will receive your letter, it's best to leave out sensitive topics.

If you feel stuck, try writing **as if you are chatting with a friendly person in the line at the grocery store.** Tell them about the weather, what is going on in your life, or a funny thing you heard about recently.



MORE LETTER WRITING IDEAS

GENERAL PROMPTS

INTRODUCE YOURSELF!

- Where do you live?
- Who is in your family (including pets)?
- Where do you go to school or work?

FAVORITE THINGS

- What is your favorite color - and WHY?
- Subject at school
- Outdoor activity
- Food
- Place to visit
- Book, movie, board game, etc.
- Activities and Experiences
- What is something fun you recently did with family or friends?
- What are some of the adjustments you are making during COVID?
- What is something you are working on (i.e. building a tree house or trying to perfect your muffin recipe)?
- What is a new place you recently discovered that you want to go back to?
- What are other people in your family doing?
- What is something interesting you are learning or recently learned?

SEASONAL IDEAS

- What is your favorite thing about the current season and why?
- What is one of your strongest memories related to this season?
- What is a recent seasonal experience (i.e. a snowy day in winter, a summer swim in the lake)?
- What seasonal changes are happening outside in nature?
- What is the weather like?
- What does this season remind you of?

HOLIDAYS

- Send wishes for a happy holiday.
- What is your favorite thing about this holiday?
- How are you celebrating it this year?

Fall: Halloween, Thanksgiving (what are you grateful for?)

Winter: Mid-winter Holidays, New Year's Day (do you have plans or wishes for the New year?), Valentines Day

Spring: May Day, Memorial Day

Summer: Independence Day/4th of July