

Leeds Action Communication Workshop Lesson Plan

By Beth Leeds

PURPOSE

The Leeds Action Communication Workshop will teach students effective letter-writing techniques to empower them to help decision-makers direct policies. By writing cards to legislators, Students will learn how to draft lobbying letters, including asking a question in the letter in order to receive a reply. Also included with the card is a group letter with signatures of all participating students and teachers as well as a beautiful 'Leeds Certificate of Appreciation' with the decision maker's name written in gold

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 3 cards and envelopes for each student (25 students = 75 cards)
- 3 letters from student group written on resume paper signed by all students
- 3 large Leeds Certificates of Appreciation (2 on a page) and small certificates for each student and teacher (6 on a page)
- 3 large mailing envelopes addressed to decision makers (Return Receipt Requested)
- 1 camera to document event
- 1 gold pen
- 1 hopper (cardboard or file box for mailing envelopes)



ACTIVITY/PROCESS

Homework Assignment

Students should find a current event in the newspaper or online relating to an action of a legislative body and bring it to class. It can be a bill, act or other policy that is coming up for vote or one that has recently passed or been overturned, which they feel strongly in support of or against. They should write a short summary explaining what happened and why they feel it's important. They should determine who was or would be in charge of the decision and how they might contact this person.

Part 1: Setting A Purpose (1 hr)

The class begins with a discussion of current events that are of interest to the students. What do they feel strongly about? What is your issue that you want to address today and who do you want to write an effective letter to? What is your goal and do you have solutions to offer? The class should vote on the top issue to address.

Part 2: Drafting Correspondence (1 hr)

The class should collectively brainstorm their concerns and solutions. Distribute cards and envelopes to students. The students will have 40 minutes to write three cards each and place them in addressed envelopes.

With ten minutes to go, the group letter will be typed and printed for students to sign. The names of the recipients of the certificates of appreciation will be handwritten. Three large envelopes will be addressed to the three decision makers and the cards, letter and certificates will be placed inside the hopper, ready to take to the post office.

Part 3: Following Up (1 hr)

The following week the students and teacher will conference call or Skype the decision maker's secretary to make sure that their package was received. Students will "debrief" about how the exercise made them feel, and what future aspirations or actions could be.

GOAL

The intent of this Leeds Action Communications Workshop is to show the students that through action they do have a voice in public affairs. Having had this experience, the students should be more comfortable in writing letters and contacting decision makers in the future.

EVALUATION

Teachers will update Beth with workshop progress. To find out more, ask questions or book a Leeds Action workshop led by Beth Leeds call (808) 938-8008 or email to bethleeds@gmail.com

CONCLUSION



*The student who takes the teachings and applies them increases their knowledge.”
~Hawaiian Proverb*