



Penpal Letter Writing Tips

How to get started:

- Review your penpal's profile before writing your introductory letter. We'd recommend starting a filing system for all communications with your penpal.
- Inquire about a timeline to send your letter, according to the school schedule. Note: if your penpal is in secondary school, they will be onsite at their boarding school for 3 months at a time. You are more than welcome to send a letter during this time, but we will need to wait until the student returns from school in order to provide you a corresponding letter in response.
- The purpose of your introductory letter is to start the communication with your penpal, remembering your role is to inspire and encourage. The very fact that the students receive mail lets them know that someone cares...that they are special!
- Briefly introduce yourself to your penpal, including family, pets, hobbies, and other interests, possibly including location where you live, but more general. Ensure to avoid discussing material items such as a house or car, as these children live in very humble conditions and it's difficult for them to relate.
- Show enthusiasm when writing your letter.
- Ask questions about your penpal's interests, including school, and other activities.
- Close with an encouraging message.

The letters should be no longer than one page and can be either hand written in block print or typed.

We will review all letters to ensure messaging is on target and deliver them to the students. One easy way to submit your letter is to take a picture of it with your phone and send the picture to info@mojatu.org.



Below is a sample letter for your reference:

Dear (Your Penpal's Name),

My name is Mary, and I am very excited to be your penpal. I have a daughter and two grandchildren who live close by here in Texas. I enjoy babysitting and spending time with them. One of my interests is my love of reading – I love a good book.

I received your picture and made a special place for it on my desk. I love your smile!! (I enjoyed the video you made for me. It brought a smile to my face, and I am going to be so happy to really get to know you.)

I want to know what are your interests both in and out of school. What are your favorite subjects in school? What other activities do you like? I enjoy being outside taking long walks. Do you like to spend time outside? (Are you playing any sports at school? I am sure soccer is a favorite sport of many students.)

I want to encourage you to study hard and always remember to set goals for yourself. I wish for you to have fun and learn something new everyday. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Mary Smith

After sending your introductory letter, writing back and forth with your student should feel like a natural conversation. Respond to the questions and comments they include in their letters to you, and feel free to ask your own questions about them in return. Remember, you are building a lasting relationship with this student; it's only natural for friends to want to know more about their friends!