CWA: Civic Action Letter

The purpose of the “Civic Action Letter” is to have students develop an informed opinion about a controversial issue, clearly formulate their argument and engage in the process of being a citizen by taking action that leads to change. The letter can be an airing or one’s informed and supported opinion in a public forum like a “Letter to the Editor” or one directed to a political persona that has the ability to act on and influence government decisions and policies. Who you choose to write to depends on what you are trying to accomplish.

The format of the “Letter” is as illustrated below. Center it vertically on the page to achieve visual balance.

Skip 2 lines from top of page

Date

Skip 2 lines

Name of addressee

Title of addressee

Address of addressee

City, State & Zip Code of addressee

Skip 2 lines

Greeting to addressee (Dear \_\_\_): (use a colon in a business letter)

Skip 2 lines

State the problem as you see it in a paragraph

Skip 1 line

State what action you believe the individual should take or what should be done about the problem you previously stated. Explain why this is the “right” path to take.

Skip 1 line

State what you want this particular person (or entity in the case of a newspaper or organization) to DO and why you believe they have the power to make a difference in the situation.

Skip 1 line

Thank them for their time, consideration and effort. Let them know that you look forward to hearing back from with regard to their decision and action taken on the subject

Skip 1 line

Close with a sign off such “Very Truly Yours” or “Sincerely” or something appropriate like that.

Skip 3 lines (leave room for your original signature in blue or black ink)

Type your Name

Type your city and state

The address and body paragraphs are single-spaced. Use standard 1” margins when typing the document. Create an envelope for mailing it out too.