



Lesson Plan

Cover Letter-Polishing

Created: 03/2016 by the National FFA Organization

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing these activities students will...

1. Identify the components and format of cover letters.
2. Discover favorable and less favorable examples of cover letters.
3. Compose an individualized cover letter.

TIME REQUIRED: 30 minutes

RESOURCES:

1. FFA.org
2. Website: *The Writer's Handbook: Writing Cover Letters* <https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/CoverLetters.html>
3. Website: *Cover letters- The good and the bad* <https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/article/cover-letters-the-good-and-the-bad>

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. A copy of the "The Good and the Bad" worksheet for each student.
2. Internet access to play the video in real time or embed it in a PowerPoint ahead of time.

THIS QUICK LESSON PLAN WOULD WORK WELL AS:

1. Part of a career unit.
2. Part of a job interview lesson/unit.

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE ALIGNED TO THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action: Assume responsibility and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired results, no matter what the goal or task at hand.
- FFA.PL-F.Continuous Improvement: Accept responsibility for learning and personal growth.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth: Assume responsibility for attaining and improving upon the skills needed for career success.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication: Effectively interact with others in personal and professional settings.

AFNR Cluster Skills

- CS.05. Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources career pathways.

Common Core- Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Common Core- Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason. Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods.
- CRP.10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals. Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and the regularly act on a plan to attain these goals.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Communication
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Leadership and Responsibility

NAME: _____

LESSON PLAN:

1. *Introduction:* To help students understand the necessity of creating a cover letter when applying for jobs, ask them the following questions: "How many of you like to get new things like clothing, phones, music, cars?" "In order to get new items, what does it take?" (Help them get to the response, money). "How many of you have to buy your own items right now?" "Eventually, all of you will be paying for your own *new* items; which will only be made possible from the money you make in a job or career." "What is the first step in getting a job?" (Applying- cover letter, resume, application).

"Today, we're going to discuss how to create an effective cover letter to help you get a job interview."

2. *Activity:*
 - a. Direct students to the online resource *The Writer's Handbook: Writing Cover Letters*. The direct url is <https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/CoverLetters.html>.
 - i. Each student will need a copy of the handout "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." They will record their answers while using the resource.
 - b. After completing, direct students to the cover letter example resource *Cover letters- The good and the bad*. The direct url is <https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/article/cover-letters-the-good-and-the-bad>.
3. *Follow-up:* Review the components and format of cover letters with the class as well as the examples of good and bad examples.
4. *Leveling up:* Now that the students know the components, formatting, and what a good cover letter looks like. After everyone has completed their cover letters, have them peer review each others' cover letters.

NAME: _____

Aligned to the following standards:
FFA.PL-A; FFA.PL.F; FFA.PG-I; FFA.CS-M; CS.05.;
CCSS.W.9-12.2; CCSS.SL.9-12.1; CRP.04;
CRP.10

The Good and the Bad

DIRECTIONS:

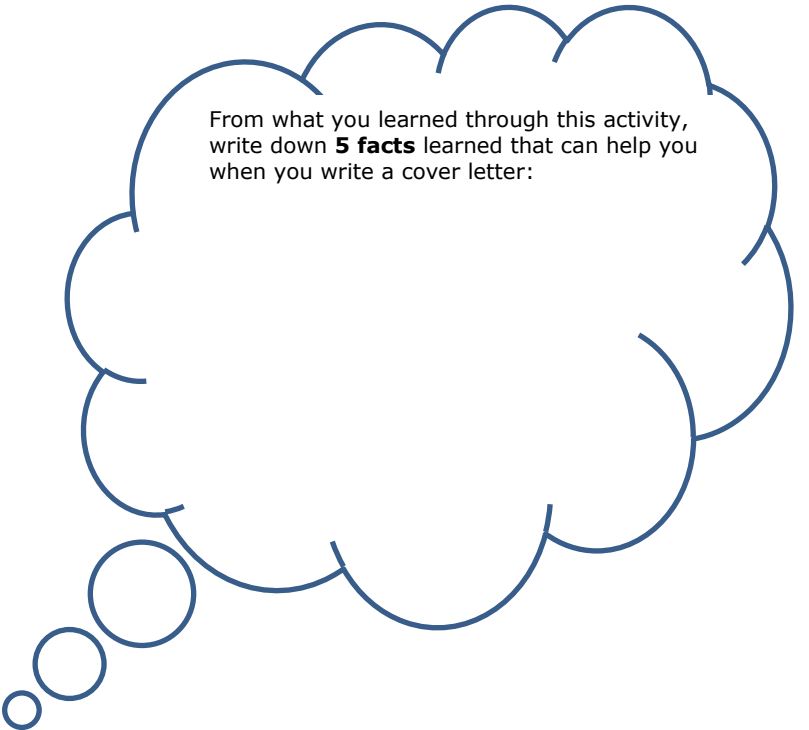
Part 1: Visit the online resource *The Writer's Handbook: Writing Cover Letters* and answer the questions below.

1. What should you include in your cover letter?
2. How should a cover letter be organized?
3. Why are cover letters important?

Part 2: Now that you know the components and organization of a cover letter visit the online resource *Cover letters- The good and the bad*. Look at the examples of the good, the bad, and the ugly and identify the pros and cons for each cover letter.

The Good:

The Bad:



From what you learned through this activity, write down **5 facts** learned that can help you when you write a cover letter:

NAME: _____

Aligned to the following standards:
FFA.PL-A; FFA.PL.F; FFA.PG-I; FFA.CS-M; CS.05.;
CCSS.W.9-12.2; CCSS.SL.9-12.1; CRP.04;
CRP.10

KEY: The Good and the Bad

DIRECTIONS:

Part 1: Visit the online resource *The Writer's Handbook: Writing Cover Letters* and answer the questions below.

1. What should you include in your cover letter?

Match the employer's needs to your skills
Tailor to each job opportunity
Write clear, use action verbs
Show some personality

2. How should a cover letter be organized?

Opening Paragraph-why you are writing, point of contact (How you found out about the job), brief detail about yourself

Body Paragraphs (2-3)-highlight biggest point on enclosed resume, highlight points that directly link to position, show how your education and experience link to position

Closing Paragraph- stress action, indicate if other materials are included or being sent, thank reader for consideration

3. Why are cover letters important?

It is the first impression employers have of you. It gives them a little insight into who you are.

Part 2: Now that you know the components and organization of a cover letter visit the online resource *Examples of good and bad cover letters*. Look at the examples of the good, the bad, and the ugly and identify the pros and cons for each cover letter.

The Good:

Pro-Very well spoken, highlights strengths, call to action

Con-

The Bad:

Pro-Connects what they have learned at their previous job

Con-misspellings, don't know anything about the company