

Cause for Commas

Purpose

Students will practice using commas in the greeting and closure of a letter, with dates and items in a series.

Materials

For the teacher: sample letter on a transparency, overhead projector, chalk, chalkboard, pencils

For each student: copy of Black Line Master (BLM) *Form Letter*

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Preparation

Plan a classroom event that you will want to invite parents to attend or a field trip that will require their permission.

B. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Discuss with students the upcoming event or field trip that you have planned.
2. Explain to them the need to write an informative letter to their parents about it.
3. Define the punctuation mark known as the comma and demonstrate its many uses in a letter.
4. Inform students that they will be writing to their own parents, practicing using the comma correctly in their letter.

C. Activity

1. Place the sample letter transparency on the overhead projector.
2. Have students assist you in placing all of the commas in it.
3. Brainstorm with your students a list of important facts that need to be included in this letter. List them on the chalkboard.
4. Give each student a copy of the BLM *Form Letter*.
5. Allow time for the students to write their letters.

D. Close the Activity

1. Hold a quick conference with each student to look over the letter and check for proper use of commas.
2. Rewrite letters on real stationery or decorate the original letters before sending them home.

MEETING
INDIVIDUAL



NEEDS

Students may dictate their letter to an older student or parent volunteer or teacher if writing is a challenge.

connecting
across the
curriculum



Science


Have students write letters of invitation to a science fair, or letters of request when special items are needed for projects in the classroom.


Standards Link
2.5.3


Questions for Review

Basic Concepts and Processes

After the activity, ask students the following questions:

 Why do we use commas?

 Can you give me examples in a friendly letter where commas are used?

 How do you know where to put commas when writing a letter?

Name: _____

Form Letter

Dear _____

Form Letter

Teacher Directions

Give students copies of the BLM *Form Letter*, and provide them with details of the event they are writing about.

Answer Key

Answers will vary, but a sample might look like:

May 17, 2001
(date)

Dear Mom and Dad,
(greeting)

My class is going on a fieldtrip to the County Zoo on Tuesday, May 21. We will be leaving school at 9:00 and returning at 2:00. I need to bring a sack lunch, a drink in a plastic container, good walking shoes, and a jacket. I may also bring you, too, if you would like to come!
(body)

Love,
(closing)

Katie
(signature)