

# Writing an effective letter

## Here are a few tips on writing effective letters:

- Address letters to the right person, at the right address; use the correct salutation for the person you are writing to.
- Include the date, your address and signature.
- If appropriate, indicate something about yourself; for example, your age, your school level or the group you belong to.
- Be succinct and to the point; one page is best.
- Begin by stating the reason for writing. For example:

*'I am concerned about...'*

*'I have been learning about... and I think...'*

*'I am writing to ask you to...'*

*'Today's Centreville Star reports that...'*



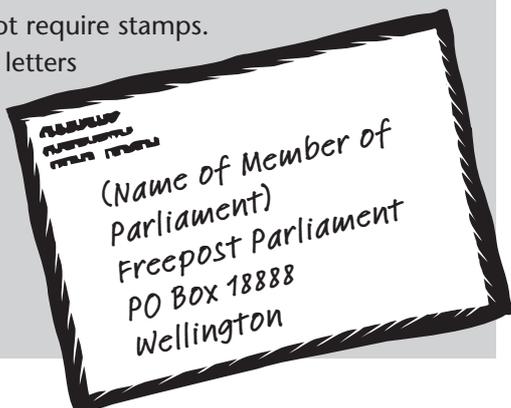
- Always be respectful – never abusive or insulting.
- Demonstrate that you are informed about the issue:
  - Clearly state something you know about the issue.
  - You could include a brief, convincing quote from something you have read (with reference to the source). Or you could choose to quote from a respected international agreement such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
  - You could offer praise for something the reader is already doing on this issue.
- Show understanding that the reader (for example, your Member of Parliament) hears many points of view.
- Present a reasonable, convincing solution or plan of action. Clearly state what you want the reader to do.
- Edit your letter to ensure it is well written, with no errors in spelling, grammar or format.

## Letters to Members of Parliament

do not require stamps.

Send letters

to:



## Letters to the Editor

of a newspaper do require a stamp. You can find the address for a newspaper:

1. on the Letters to the Editor page
2. by using an online directory, e.g. [www.whitepages.co.nz](http://www.whitepages.co.nz)
3. in a phonebook

