

CAREER READINESS

Cover Letter Workshop

Turn evidence into a targeted, professional message

GRADES 9-12	TIME 2 x 42 min	GROUPING I / pairs / whole	PRODUCT Application artifact
YOUR CHALLENGE Write a one-page cover letter for a fictional Youth Program Assistant opportunity. Your letter must connect specific evidence to employer needs, add value beyond the resume, and use a professional opening, body, closing, and file name.			

Learning Goals

- Decode a posting for needs and keywords.
- Select truthful evidence from school, work, service, projects, or family responsibilities.
- Write claims supported by examples and results.
- Revise for audience, clarity, tone, and conventions.

Fictional Posting

Lakeside Recreation Center seeks a dependable Youth Program Assistant to greet families, prepare materials, support games and projects, organize spaces, and communicate respectfully. Applicants should be reliable, organized, comfortable with young people, able to collaborate, and familiar with basic computer tools. Paid experience is not required.

Before You Write

What is the employer trying to accomplish, and what could make this job difficult?

Part 1 - Decode and Match

Employer need / keyword	Evidence I can offer	Specific example or result
Reliability		
Organization		
Communication		
Teamwork		
Youth/community experience		
Computer tools		

Circle the three strongest matches. Explain why they are stronger than the others.

Part 2 - Weak Claim to Evidence

Weak claim	What is missing?	Evidence-based revision
I am hardworking.		
I am good with kids.		
I have computer skills.		
I would be perfect for this job.		

Part 3 - Build the Letter

Section	Job of the section	Your notes
Heading/contact	Identify applicant and date; use appropriate contact information.	
Greeting	Address a named person when verified; otherwise use a professional role-based greeting.	
Opening	Name the role and give a specific reason for interest.	
Body paragraph 1	Connect strongest evidence to employer needs.	
Body paragraph 2	Add another relevant example; do not repeat resume bullets word for word.	
Closing	Restate interest, request next step, thank reader.	

Evidence Formula

FORMULA Employer need + action you took + context + evidence/result + connection to the role.

Draft your opening paragraph:

Draft two evidence paragraphs:

Draft your closing:

Part 4 - Diagnose a Sample

Dear Hiring Manager, I want this job because it looks fun. I am hardworking and responsible. I helped with many things at school and I am good with computers. I think I would be perfect. Please call me. Thanks, Alex

Problem	Exact evidence from sample	Revision strategy
Generic opening		
Unsupported claims		
No employer connection		
Tone/conventions		
Weak closing		

Rewrite the sample as one strong opening and one evidence paragraph.

Part 5 - Peer Review and Final Draft

- ☐ The role and employer are named accurately.
- ☐ Opening gives a specific reason for interest.
- ☐ At least two employer needs connect to truthful evidence.
- ☐ Examples add information beyond the resume.
- ☐ Tone is confident without exaggeration.
- ☐ Paragraphs are concise and easy to scan.
- ☐ Spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and names are correct.
- ☐ Closing requests an appropriate next step.
- ☐ File name is professional: Firstname_Lastname_Cover_Letter.pdf.

Final Reflection

Which sentence provides your strongest evidence? What did you remove or revise because it was vague, repetitive, or unsupported?

PRIVACY Use only contact information your teacher approves for classroom work. Never invent credentials, results, references, or experience.