



Advocacy Legislature

Letter to

Objective	Students will understand how to express their opinion about issues to the government in a productive manner.		
Grade Levels	6 th – 12 th Grade		
Duration	20 minutes		
# of Kids	30 students		
Setting	In Class Lesson	Outdoor Classroom	Professional Development
	After School	Field Trip	Career Day
	Recycling Team Training	Parent Meeting	Community Event
Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pencils ● Paper ● Enlarged letter outline 		
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask students to raise their hand if they have ever felt their voice or opinion ignored. Explain that for people in a handful of other countries this is common but in the United States we are fortunate enough to have a democracy where we can freely express our opinions to our government. Elaborate that in parts of the world that freedom of speech is not a right, as outlined in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. ● Explain that today students will be writing a letter to their local representative in the City Council to share their opinion about the issue of waste and recycling in the City of Detroit. Elaborate that throughout history this way of expressing opinion has created positive change in policies based on public opinion. ● Ask students what environmental issues are important in Detroit and why we as Detroiters should care about these issues. As students make share their opinions make a list of topics that can be viewed by all students. Make sure that only topics that are listed focus on the environment and why Detroiters should take action on these issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples: factory air emissions and water pollution, keeping the Detroit River clean, better public transportation to reduce the amount of oil used, more trashcans to reduce littering, increased access to recycling (curbside recycling), more effective trash collection/pick up ● Have students select one of the issues brainstormed together to write their letter to city council about. Be specific that students should keep their letter on 		

topic and focus on what they want city council to do about these issues with clear ideas to change the problem.

- Explain that when writing a letter to someone in the government it is important to follow official letter writing which is different than a letter they would send to their grandmother.
- Letter Outline:

School Address
City, State Zip
Date

The Honorable _____
City Hall Address
Detroit, MI

Dear Council *Member's Last Name*:

Explain why you are writing. *I am writing to ask you to make future decisions that protect and conserve our environment.*

Make it personal. Explain who students are.

Explain why students care about the environment and some information they have learned.

Explain why students are asking for their support and how they can show their support. Incorporate alternatives or ideas brainstormed.

Thank you for your time and I appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Students Name

- Have one or two students share their letter. Explain that GLS will send these letters to the city council to show our support of environmentally conscious decisions for our city.
- Ask students what the best way they can help the environment is. Allow students to answer then explain that the easiest and often most effective way to help the environment is to share information with others and leading by example on environmental issues like littering. Elaborate that by making other aware of issues students are able to decrease the negative impact on the environment.

Modifications

- The topic students brainstorm and write about can be adapted to a specific lesson; like when discussing what resources are used to generate electricity students can write a letter to legislation about encouraging the use of alternative energies like solar and wind power.

