

Letter from Camp

Getting a letter in the mail from a loved one is an exciting and heartwarming experience. This summer, if your child is trying overnight camp, make sure you're caught up on what's going on in his life by establishing the tradition of sending a letter home. While the typical letter home for many kids is a monument to brevity, this year as you help your kid pack, here's a sneaky suggestion—give your child templates for three versions of a "Deluxe Letter Home." Stick them in your child's bags with some stamped envelopes and a pack of pens and colored pencils!

In this activity, your child will practice writing a letter home before he goes off to camp.



What You Need:

- Downloadable templates (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Small pack of fine-tipped, water based colored markers or colored pencils
- Pencil sharpener (optional)
- Stamped and addressed envelopes

What You Do:

1. First, wherever your child is going, make sure he knows you would like him to write a letter home!
2. Read through the Deluxe Letter together and talk about the important parts in a letter.
3. Have your child decide who the recipient of the letter should be. Your child may want to write to you, but remember that lots of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends might love to get a letter as well.
4. After deciding on a recipient, model and write a sample letter or two together before he goes off to camp. As you do this, you both can discuss what kinds of things make a good letter and why. Now your child has an idea of the letter you would like to receive while he's away!
5. When he's off at camp, he'll feel more prepared and inspired to write a letter (maybe even several!) home.

Optional: To further inspire your child to write home, you can also encourage him to decorate the self-addressed, stamped envelopes and provide him the opportunity to practice address-writing as well.

Letter-writing and self-expression are important personal and academic skills. Personally, this type of writing helps your child stay connected to you and to the world they know, while branching out and making sense of what's coming their way. Academically, letter writing is a part of the language arts curriculum and is something all elementary school children must learn. Having your child practice writing letters in this activity helps him build his academic writing skills in a way that is natural, practical, and enduring.