



## A Lesson on Soldier's Letter by Janai Weber

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour

**Lesson Keywords:** google.com

**Lesson Description:** This is a lesson on basic grammar and sentence structure using the format of a letter. Also this will allow the students to learn how to write a proper letter using proper grammar and punctuations. It is meant to be a fun learning activity that allows students to become very creative with there writing skills.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.9: Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.5.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.5.4: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2a: Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Soldier's Letter

by

**Content:** My dear Mother,

It is a very hard time we are having here at Valley Forge. We have little food. I am so glad you made me take the blanket with me when I left. It was a lot of trouble carrying it with me, but every day I use it. I sit huddled under it in the very cold snow and ice. I have two friends that I often share it with. I cut it into three pieces, and each of us has one part. They thank you, too.

When we first came here, George Washington told us it would be hard. But I had not idea it would be so very difficult. There are not many people around to help us. We went to a farm yesterday to beg for food. But the farmer shouted at us to leave. He said he hoped we would just go home and stop this fighting. He does not understand that we are fighting for his freedom, too.

Every day I pray that we will win the war. But every day I get discouraged. My friends and I try to stay hopeful. And George Washington comes to talk with us one by one every day. He says to stay hopeful.

He brought a new man to help us a man from another country. The man is from Germany, and does not speak English very well. A few people who know German tell him what we are saying, and they translate his words for us, too. His name is Von Steuben, and they say he is an expert at fighting a war.

George Washington says that we will do better if we learn from Von Steuben. The German is very clever, and he shows us how to fight better. I never knew much about fighting and I assumed you just ran across the battlefield. But, he reminds us that we must have a plan for each fight. I think George Washington has found us the help we need to win the war.

I will write to you again next week. We do not have much paper, so I have to stop my letter now. I hope the family is well and I hope I see you soon.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

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**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** Freedom **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** What does the soldier mean by the word freedom when he responds to the farmers demand?

- A: Being in control
- B: A state of Liberty
- C: Being held captive
- D: To be independent

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "freedom" correctly?

- A: The parents of the child showed there freedom when they spoke with the child's teacher.
- B: The fireworks outside are full of freedom and sparkling colors.
- C: Many of the freedom writers in the class were always told what to write for each assignment.
- D: In New York, on 911, many firefighters and officers showed that they will fight for the victims freedom under any condition.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Clever **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** Throughout the story, the author says, "The German is very clever", what does he mean by this? How were the Germans acting in order to get categorized as clever?

- A: Being humble
- B: Knowing where to go
- C: Having a sharp intelligence
- D: Very mean towards others

**Question:** Which of the following sentences show the appropriate context of the word "clever"?

- A: The dog was very clever and afraid when it was storming outside last night.
- B: I was unaware that the buckle on my belt looked like cleverness.
- C: When I was watching the movie with my friends the other day, t was safe to say that we were clever and made not enough popcorn for everyone.
- D: As I presented my project for the science fair, the students complimented me on how clever my invention really was.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Translate **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** In the story what does it mean to "translate" something from the other countries?

- A: To change languages
- B: To write a new language
- C: To be punished by another country
- D: To become acceptable

**Question:** Choose the correct sentence that shows the proper context of the word "translate".

- A: During english class, the teacher made us translate some of Shakespears older writing into the modern day language.
- B: When I was watching the movie, my body had translated into sleep mode because I was so tired.
- C: The grass in the park translated into brown grass after the sprinkler broke.
- D: My sisters hair went from blonde to brown within a year of being translated on by the hair dresser.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Discouraged **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** Based on what the other said about how every day I pray that we will win the war. But every day I get "discouraged", what would be a synonymn for the meaning of being discouraged?

- A: Frustrated
- B: Depressed
- C: Worried
- D: Ecstatic

**Question:** Based on the sentences provided below, which sentence is correct in the sense of the word, "discouraged" context?

- A: After I had won first place I felt so discouraged because I ended up doing very well in the competition.

**B:** During the movie the ghost had a discouraged presence because they acheived its goal of scaring little kids.

**C:** At baseball practice I kept missing the ball whenever I was batting, which was very discouraging.

**D:** Tyler and I went to the mall to pick up a new pair of shoes that were discouraging in there neon yellow color.

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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - Why do you think the farmer got angry with the soldier's when they wanted food?

Based on the context of the story, it says "There are not many people around to help us. We went to a farm yesterday to beg for food. But the farmer shouted at us to leave. He said he hoped we would just go home and stop this fighting, because of this how would this affect the farmer's response and why would he have acted in such a way?"

### 2 - Based on the story's plot, what is a main theme throughout this story?

After you have read the story, think to yourself and determine what some of the themes are that were presented throughout this entire story. What made you decide this particular theme? Support your answer with three examples.

### 3 - George Washington is one of the main subjects in this story, do you think that his character was positive or negative towards the soldier?

Throughout the entire story, George Washington is one of the main subjects in what the letter is revolved around. Explain your opinion on whether or not he is a positive or negative voice in the story, using three different examples presented in the story.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** For this essay, reflect on the outline and overall tone of the story and how it reflects and is shared with others. Create a 500 word essay that is in the format of a letter and is to your family. The letter can be about anything you want but must use the four vocabulary words that were presented above. Use examples if needed and elaborate on the main points of the essay.

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