

Take It, Make It Pen Pals

Handwritten letters are magical. Writing a letter is an old-fashioned way to communicate with someone, in a time when we more often text or email them. Writing a letter is a slower way to communicate, but it can be more artfully done and can create a closer relationship. You can even send little, flat art that you make, or perhaps stickers. There is something satisfying about putting a pen to paper, sending a letter, and having patience to wait for the response.



Supplies

- Paper
- Envelope
- Pens or markers
- Stamp

You can use any paper, as long as the envelope is flat when you mail it.

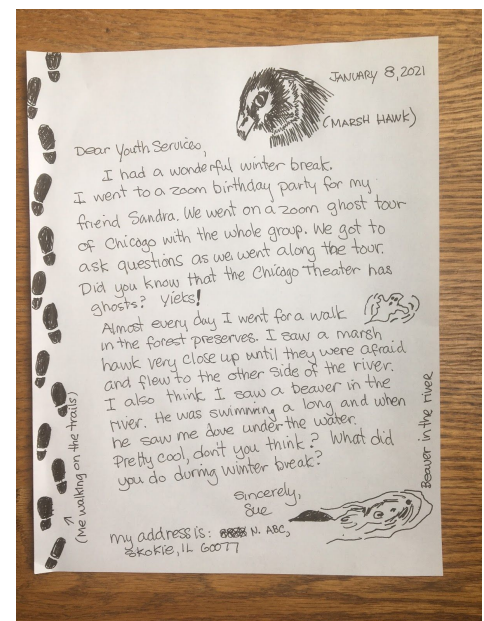
Instructions

- Grab your pen and paper. Write the way you would normally speak. Write about your interests. There is no need to impress your pen pal with fanciful stories. One or two pages is enough. Writing more may overwhelm your pen pal and cause them to not write back.
- Ask your pen pal a few questions about themselves. This way they will have something to respond to.
- Understand that it will take a week or more to get a response.

Who to write to:

- Family member
- Friend
- The library! You can write to us and one of us will write back:

Skokie Public Library
Youth Services Department
5215 Oakton Street
Skokie, IL 60077



A few ideas to write about

- Your pets
- Favorite foods
- Favorite hobbies and/or interests
- A family tradition
- Places you would like to visit or have visited
- Books and movies you have read or seen
- A dream you have
- Three things you are grateful for right now
- Music or singers you like
- A goal you wish to achieve

Tips for a great pen pal letter

- When writing a letter, you usually start with a greeting. Let's say you are writing to Jon; you would write: Dear Jon, Greetings Jon, or Hello Jon. Usually the greeting is on the left side of the letter before you start writing the body of the letter. The date you are writing the letter is usually in the top right corner. Once those are done you can write your letter.
- Don't forget to sign your letter and include your address so a letter can be sent back to you.
- You can make your letter fancier by adding art to your paper or drawings to your letter. To do this, you can take the special piece of paper included in your pack. Trace the open envelope (the inserted paper only needs to go halfway into the envelope) and cut the traced envelope shape a half inch smaller of the traced shape. Test the insert, making sure not to cover the area that you moisten to seal the envelope shut. Using a glue stick, put glue on the top area and partway down. There is no need to glue the whole piece so it will stay in place. This looks pretty cool.
- Address your envelope by putting your return address on the upper-left corner of the envelope. The name of your pen pal and their address should be written clearly in the center of the front of the envelope.
- Put a stamp in the upper-right corner of the front of the envelope .

You can add a little art or design to your envelopes, but be sure the address is easy to read so your letter can be delivered. Have fun! We can't wait to hear from you.

Send a photo of your project to mycreation@skokielibrary.info and we may feature it on social media.

