

Allow Me to Introduce Myself

Writing a Letter of Introduction



Jane Baber

Published by K20 Center

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Grade Level	8th Grade	Duration	4
Subject	English/Language Arts		
Course	Composition		

Essential Question

Which experiences have shaped who you are?

Summary

A letter of introduction can serve as a personal statement. It paints a picture of who someone is as a unique individual based on experiences at home, in school, within their culture, and learned within their community. In this lesson, students will compose a formal letter of introduction that allows others to understand elements of themselves that may otherwise take a while to learn. In addition, it allow students the chance to share what they would like to be known about themselves. This lesson would fit well at the beginning of the year as a getting-to-know-you activity and formative writing assessment between teacher and new students.

Snapshot

Engage

Students listen to a song about how self-introductions can be uncomfortable.

Explore

Students examine the lyrics to the song "An Awkward Self Introduction" and use the Why-Lighting strategy to annotate similarities and differences between their and the singer's experiences.

Explain

Students draft the body of their letter of introduction, using a list of topics to consider for inspiration.

Extend

Students edit their writing to fit with the format of a formal letter.

Evaluate

Students edit and revise their writing for changes in grammar, format, style, and content.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.2.W.1: Routinely and recursively prewrite (e.g., develop ideas and plan).

8.2.W.2: Routinely and recursively organize and develop ideas to compose a first draft.

Attachments

- [An Awkward Self Introduction Lyrics—Allow Me to Introduce Myself - Spanish.docx](#)
- [An Awkward Self Introduction Lyrics—Allow Me to Introduce Myself - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [An Awkward Self Introduction Lyrics—Allow Me to Introduce Myself.docx](#)
- [An Awkward Self Introduction Lyrics—Allow Me to Introduce Myself.pdf](#)
- [Lesson Slides—Allow Me to Introduce Myself.pptx](#)
- [Writing a Letter of Introduction Handout—Allow Me to Introduce Myself - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Writing a Letter of Introduction Handout—Allow Me to Introduce Myself - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Writing a Letter of Introduction Handout—Allow Me to Introduce Myself.docx](#)
- [Writing a Letter of Introduction Handout—Allow Me to Introduce Myself.pdf](#)

Materials

- Access to YouTube for music video
- Computer
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- An Awkward Self Introduction Lyric Sheet (attached; one per student)
- Writing a Letter of Introduction (attached; one per student)

10 minutes

Engage

Start with the essential question on **slide 3** of the attached **Lesson Slides**: "Which experiences have shaped who you are?"

Display **slide 4** and ask students the following question: Have you ever been asked by a teacher to introduce yourself through an ice breaker at the beginning of the year?

Wait for student responses (they'll likely respond "Yes!"), then continue with subsequent questions like "What was the experience like?" "What kinds of things did you share in your brief introduction?" "Why would a teacher ask the members of a class to introduce themselves to each other?"

For students who have offered that it can be uncomfortable to introduce themselves to a crowd, tell them that they are not alone in their feelings. Ask, "Why is it uncomfortable sometimes to introduce ourselves?" "What can be gained from introductions?" This last question may seem obvious, but allow students to work through and share their answers.

On **slide 5**, introduce the video below, "[An Awkward Introduction](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPlqeaVe9Ok)". In the video, a young woman named Janelle sings a self-composed song about introducing herself. Tell students that they are not watching the video to critique the singer's talent (in fact, context clues from the title should reveal that she is explicitly trying to seem "awkward") but rather, listen to her words to absorb someone else's personal experience of introducing herself.

Embedded video

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=FPlqeaVe9Ok>

5 minutes

Explore

Pass out copies of **An Awkward Self Introduction Lyrics** after students have listened. Move to **slide 6** and tell students that they will now annotate the lyrics using the [Why-Lighting](#) strategy.

Tell students to look for similarities and differences between the singer and their own feelings or experiences. As they scan the lyrics, they should highlight experiences the singer has had that stand out based on being the same or different to the students' experiences.

For example, when the singer says "I can be a little weird," some students may be able to relate. Students that relate should highlight that line, and to the side jot down how they see themselves as quirky or "weird".

Allow about five minutes for students to scan and annotate the lyrics for personal similarities and differences.

Display **slide 7** and let students know that they will be composing an introduction to their teacher (or other applicable audience). Have them go over the lyrics one last time, this time highlighting in a different color or underline certain points that they would not have initially considered including in an introduction, but would like to include.

45 minutes

Explain

Now that students understand the goals of introductions and have sourced information for what to include, it's time to enter the drafting phase of this writing process.

Introduce and pass out the attached handout "**Writing A Letter of Introduction**." Read the introduction together. This provides an overview of the assignment and goals of writing a letter of introduction.

Teacher's Note

At this point, decide if there are any modifications to be made to the assignment's audience. This handout and lesson are geared toward a letter of introduction to a teacher, but it could also be adjusted to be a literary character's letter of introduction to another character, etc. You may also decide to adjust the font style and size suggestions.

Specify to students that they will be writing a letter of introduction explaining specific characteristics of who they are. The letter should be composed in a formal style in order to practice this genre of writing. Remind students that in a formal style, they should write out contractions, use transitions between paragraphs, spell out numbers and follow other formal writing rules you may choose to include. For this letter of introduction, students should use the first person voice.

Detail the writing mechanics goals on the handout, adjusting as needed for specific classroom objectives. Additionally, font style and size are suggested, but may be modified.

For this stage of the lesson, the writing mechanics, style, and format are secondary to the content - students introducing themselves. In this stage of the lesson, students should start drafting the body of their letter of introduction, brainstorming responses to compose four paragraphs (first three about themselves, the last paragraph about their relationship to school).

Students have already delved into the exercise of finding what they would and would not consider sharing about themselves through examining the lyrics of "An Awkward Self Introduction". Now, using the "Topics to Consider" portion of the handout, have students read the questions and prompts to begin drafting their letter.

This particular letter requests four paragraphs:

- Paragraph 1 - You
- Paragraph 2 - You
- Paragraph 3 - You
- Paragraph 4 - School (TBD)

Teacher's Note

Letter drafting process (typed, handwritten) and the topics of the paragraph are up to the teacher depending on the needs of each classroom and the point in the year at which this lesson is taught.

Give students time now to begin drafting their letters. This drafting needs one full class period, but you may choose to provide more depending on your students.

Extend

Once enough time has been provided for student drafting, shift the focus to writing mechanics, style, and format of the introductory letter.

Proceed to **slide 8**.

As an extension of the letter-drafting process, turn students' attention back to the handout. In particular, go over the format. The letter should begin with a salutation (Dear...) with the date on the same line. A line should then be skipped between the salutation and the beginning of the body of the letter. Each paragraph should begin with an appropriate transition (First, Next, Additionally, etc.). At the end of the body of the letter, another line should be skipped and a closing salutation (Thank you, Sincerely, etc.) should precede a printed name and signature.

Teacher's Note

Many students who have been raised as digital citizens do not have experience with the difference between printing their name and having a signature. Gauge where students are with this and practice if necessary.

The first draft of letters may not have been written in this format. This is the chance, in a new class period, to rewrite a second or final draft that puts the letter in the appropriate format.

30 minutes

Evaluate

Although the focus of this lesson is for students to write about themselves, and not to introduce grammar, word choice, and the writing process, the evaluation is a chance for students to participate in the revision stage of the writing process.

Display **slide 9** and have students look over their letters and check it for:

- Grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure (look for fragments and run-ons!)
- Interesting and varied word choice and descriptions
- Clear, organized letter structure
- Distinct paragraphs that accomplish their specific tasks
- Transitions between paragraphs

For a fresh perspective, have students work with a partner and peer-edit each other's letters. Since these letters are a personal introduction, allowing students the chance to choose their own partner may make sharing their content more comfortable.

Resources

- Janelle Marie Serote. (2020, November 24). *An Awkward Self-Introduction (Original Song) - Lyric Video*. [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPlqeaVe9Ok>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-Lighting. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128>