

Reading Workshop: Letter-Essayⁱ

Directions: As you get lost in the books that you are reading, you may want to share your ideas in a letter to a friend. The way that it will work is through what we will call a “letter-essay.” A letter-essay is a two page letter that describes a book that you have read. However, it is not simply a description. You may choose any book that you have completed to write a letter-essay about. You can print and give, or email, a copy of the letter to one or more friends. However you must also send a copy to Ms. Brown. Include

Topics to Write About:

The Author: (3 points)

- I like the way the author...
- I noticed how the author...
- I don't get why the author...
- If I were the author, I would have...
- I'd compare this author to... because...

The Book as a Whole: (3 points)

- I was surprised when/ angry about/ satisfied with/ moved by/ incredulous at/...
- This book reminded me of...
- The structure of this book...
- I'd say the theme of this book is... because...
- The genre of this book...
- The climax of the plot...

The Characters: (3 points)

- The main character...
- The character development...
- The narrative voice...
- The resolution of the main character's problem...

The Way you Felt or Thought: (3 points)

- I wish that...
- I didn't agree with...
- I understood...

- I couldn't understand...
- Why did...
- I rated this one ____ because...

The author's craft: (4 points)

- The author was particularly skillful at...
- The author used the following literary devices... and examples include...
- The author used fresh and creative ideas such as ...
- One thing I have learned from this book that I will use in my own writing is...

One Major Requirement: No matter what topic(s) you choose to write about, you must include at least one essential quotation from the book. (3 points)

Format: (1 point)

- Use a conventional greeting (Dear _____,) and closing (Sincerely, Your friend,). Put the date of the letter in the top right hand corner, as [per conventional letter style](#).
- Always cite the name of the author of the book and its title. Indicate the title by capitalizing and underlining it—for example, The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton.

ⁱ Adapted from Nancy Atwell, *The Reading Zone*(2007)