



Mr. Shapero
Forcey Christian School
2130 East Randolph Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
August 26, 2018

Dear Student,

Here we are at the start of another school year. Feeling pumped? Nervous? Are you mentally waving goodbye to those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer? Well, GOOD NEWS . . . only 265 days left until your next summer vacation! More good news – of those 265 days, 76 of them are Saturdays and Sundays, and let's not forget those holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Memorial Day, and so on. You also have some half days (although we teachers have to come to school). Feeling better? Okay! (Imagine a big thumbs up from me). Let me tell you a little about myself. I have six children: Josh, Jaime, Greg, Kelly, Molly, and Jordan. My wife's name is Gretchen. She's very spontaneous (look that word up). One day I came home to find out she ordered a kayak, of all things, over the Internet. I also have 2 dogs, one named Isaiah (a yellow lab/retriever mix) and one named Mia (a beagle who looks like a dachshund) and we have a cat named Luke. We used to have a cat named Winnie, who was a boy; Molly and Kelly named him Winnie when he was a stray coming around the house looking for food and they thought he was a girl, so they started calling him Winnie. Then Winnie bit Gretchen, so naturally she adopted him into our family (I told you she was spontaneous). After the animal control people held him for 10 days to make sure he didn't have rabies, we found out he was a boy, but my daughters refused to change his name. It really confused our vets!

In my spare time, I enjoy practicing my drum set and playing ping-pong; however, Gretchen won't let me get a ping-pong table because we don't have enough room in the house. I keep telling her we can get rid of the dining room table and just eat on the Ping-Pong table, but she doesn't want to do that. Some people are just unreasonable! Maybe I can play ping-pong on her kayak.

I really enjoy reading, which is fortunate, since I am, after all, a teacher. Some of my favorite authors are Frank Peretti, Avi, Gordon Korman, and my very favorite, John Flanagan. One thing I really hope to do as a teacher is to introduce you to books that are entertaining, humorous, and informative about subjects you want to explore – books that will keep you glued to the edge of your seat – books so terrific you'll think you're watching TV instead of reading! There are books like that, you know.

I also enjoy listening to oldies music and classic rock. My favorite bands and musical artists are Jon Bon Jovi, Survivor, and Chicago (the band, not the "Windy City"). I also enjoy Broadway and classical music. My favorite foods are Eggplant Parmesan and ice cream (but not mixed together).

I hope that you will have an enjoyable and productive time with me this year, and I'm looking forward to our time together.



Homework
Alert!

Sincerely,

Mr. Shapero

Mr. Shapero

P.S. You didn't think you'd get away without a homework assignment, did you?

As your first homework assignment, **I want you to jot down at least 5 things about yourself that you think will be of interest for me to learn about you.** These need not be in complete sentences (yet!) Just put them on notebook paper or print them from a computer. Include your name and date. You might include something you've done in the past, favorite things (like I included in my letter), hobbies, activities you are into, friends, etc. If you can introduce humor into your information, such as I did in my letter – terrific! It's always fun to write in a humorous style, but if you don't feel adept at doing that – just talk about things that are of great interest to **you**. Writing about things we like to talk about helps make us more successful writers.

The week we begin school, you will use your list to write a letter to me telling about yourself. You will *reread the first draft* of your letter and see what you can do to fix it up. This is called a REVISION. We revise and rewrite in 4th grade. The letter may be handwritten or entered on a computer and printed. What follows is called a **rubric**. It tells you how I'm going to grade your work. By seeing the rubric ahead of time, you can determine what grade you would like to get. I

hope you'll decide to get the highest grade you can possibly get, but that depends on whether you follow the path with the highest score. Check out the rubric below – **can you tell what things you need to do to get your very best grade?**

Writing Rubric				
	3	2	1	0
Number of sentences	Letter has at least 10 sentences	Letter has 8-9 sentences	Letter has 6-7 sentences	Letter has less than 6 sentences
Proper letter format (dated, signed, and has a return address).	All 3 are included AND properly formatted on page	All 3 are included	2 of 3 included	Less than 2 included
Sentences Make Sense. It is obvious the student reread and revised their work	All sentences make grammatical sense.	All but 1 sentence make grammatical sense.	All but 2 sentences make grammatical sense.	More than 2 sentences do not make grammatical sense.
CUPS: Capitalization, word Usage, Punctuation, and Spelling	No CUPS errors or minimal errors	A few CUPS errors	CUPS errors are fairly frequent	CUPS errors throughout
Information includes little STORIES about their lives that entertains the reader, such as in the teacher's letter.	At least 3 stories are included in the letter	2 stories included	1 story included	No stories were included
Double the score above	(see above)			
Sentences are interesting and conversant or humorous. Information is "newsy" like teacher's letter as opposed to stilted ("I like pizza, and I liked "Pirates of the Caribbean.")	Generally, sentences are like a conversation with the student. Some humor shown in their writing. The student seems to enjoy his/her own return letter.	Generally, some sentences are conversant. Plenty of info beyond the student's "likes."	Generally, somewhat stilted – sentences go just a little beyond the bare minimum of student's likes.	Very stilted. Student did not put any thought into sentences with news beyond the bare minimum.
Double the score above	(See above)			
Letter is legible (neat). Good handwriting or printed from computer	Very legible – beautiful handwriting or computer generated printing	Fairly legible	Barely legible	Not legible. Difficult to read.
Letter must include (1) 1 st draft copy, (2) the letter I wrote along with (3) this rubric	Everything attached with final letter in front	1 thing not attached as described	2 things not attached as described	3 things not attached as described
	30			
30/30 = 100% (A+)				