CHAPTER 5
Benefit of Doubt
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In this chapter you will:
- Read a short story
- Learn to write a personal letter
- Write a letter
- Create a skit
- Illustrate a scene from the story

Prereading Activities

Personal Connection
Have you ever faced a situation in which all odds were against you but you had unflinching faith in God and believed that everything will be resolved? Write about this situation and describe your feelings. If you want, you can share what you have written with your classmates and teacher.

Genre Connection
Personal letter is a type of letter which usually concerns personal matters and is sent from one individual to another. Personal letters have been a popular form of communication between people for a long time. People used to take pride in writing letters as it was considered an art in itself but due to recent technological advances the art of letter writing has been replaced by emails and short messages (Bly, 2004).

Famous letter writers:
Ernest Hemmingway
John Steinbeck
Georgia O’Keeffe
Juliette Adam
Raden Ajeng Kartini
Rancho's house – the lone house in the entire valley – was on the crown of a low hill. From the pinnacle of the hill one could see the rapid flowing stream and next to it vast fields of ripe corn in between the red kidney bean flowers. Looking at it one could predict that it was going to be good harvest but it needed a rainfall, however brief.

All through the morning Rancho kept scanning the sky for signs of rainfall and he was quite confident that it would rain. “You know, woman, now we are finally going to get some rain.” His wife, who was busy preparing food, replied: “Yes, God willing.”

As soon as Rancho’s family, his wife and sons, sat for dinner, just as he had predicted big drops of rain started falling. In the Northeast huge clouds were covering the sky like a blanket. The air had the smell of rain combined with the smell of fresh earth. The atmosphere at that time was absolutely heavenly. The boys left their food on pretext of getting one thing and another. All they wanted was to get wet and play in the rain.

Rancho was very happy as he looked at his field, “Ah! now my harvest is going to be wonderful.” He started dreaming about all the things he will be doing once he sells the crops. Suddenly heavy winds began to blow accompanied by big drops of rain, which looked like huge pearls of ice. “Oh my God! This can’t be happening,” he thought. “NO!! NO!! I will be destroyed. This is no rain, it is a hailstorm. I hope it will pass soon.” But in front of his family he kept a strong front and said, “I am sure it will pass soon, don’t worry.”

Unfortunately it didn’t. The hailstorm lasted the whole night. It destroyed entire field of his precious crops. Everything looked so white as if someone had thrown sacks and sacks of pearls all over the place.
Rancho and his wife were worried to death. Everything they had was destroyed and they had no inkling as to what they will do.

The boys asked them, “What are we going to do? Everything is destroyed. We don’t even have few pieces of corn or beans. Does this mean we are going to die of hunger?”

Rancho said, “My sons, nobody dies of hunger. Always remember we have God. I am sure he will help us.”

All through the night Rancho kept on thinking how to ask for help from God. “God knows everything but I think I should write to Him and ask directly what I want.”

Rancho was thankful for the day his parents had sent him to school. Even though he wasn’t interested in studies but he had grudgingly learned to read and write. So he took out paper and pen and started writing.

Rancho Lucas
The Violet Hill
Argentina

18th May 1999

Dear God

Hi,
I am writing this letter to you out of extreme urgency, otherwise I wouldn’t have disturbed you. You know about the recent hailstorm in my place. Well, it has destroyed me. Everything in my farm was destroyed. My corn and kidney beans were almost ready and all it needed was a rainfall but instead of rainfall came a storm. If it had lasted for short period it would have been OK, but unfortunately it lasted for an entire night. It has put me at a serious disadvantage, you see God, my sole source of income is that farm and now it is completely destroyed. Nothing is left. If I leave it like this my family will die of hunger, since we will not have anything to eat. I can’t sit still and do nothing about it. I need 100 pesos to buy the seeds and resow my field all over again and buy some food till the next harvest. So dear God, please help me. I know you will not disappoint me.

Sincerely Yours,
Rancho, the farmer
He put the letter inside an envelope and addressed it to “God, 7th Heaven” and placed a stamp on it and dropped it in the mailbox. The workers at the post office were preparing the letters to mail when they came across the letter addressed to God. The postman who came across this letter became curious because he had never seen a letter addressed to God. He wanted to open the letter but his job ethics stopped him from doing so. He decided to take the letter to the Postmaster. The Postmaster was a very nice and kind gentleman. He always helped people in any way he could. When the postman gave him the letter, he looked at it and said, “It takes a man with strong faith to start a communication with God. I wish I had such strong faith.”

After much thought, he decided to read the letter and perhaps reply it. He opened Rancho’s letter. Little did he know that replying the letter would need more than good intention, pen and paper. Rancho needed a lot of money but the postmaster didn’t have any. Since he had already decided to help Rancho, he decided to give part of his salary, and he asked his friends and co-workers to contribute. But it was impossible for him to collect 100 pesos. He was happy that at least 70 pesos were collected. So he put the money in an envelope and signed it as “God” and asked the postman to deliver it to Rancho’s house.

When the postman arrived at Rancho’s house and delivered the letter to him, Rancho was exhilarated beyond means. And he kept repeating Thank you God! Thank you God! I knew you wouldn’t let me down.

Rancho had very strong faith in God. He was not surprised when he opened the envelope. But as he was counting the money he became very angry. God couldn’t have made mistake in sending the money. So he took out paper and wrote to God again. Then he placed a stamp on it and put it in the mailbox. When the postman took the letter out, he immediately took it to the postmaster. The Postmaster quickly opened the letter and everyone in the post office gathered around him wanting to know what Rancho wrote to God.

Rancho Lucas
The Violet Hill
Argentina

20th May 1999
Dear God

I am really grateful to you for sending the money. I knew you wouldn’t let my family go hungry. Of the money you send me I only received 70 pesos. Please send me the rest. I really need the money. But, this time please, God don’t send it through the mail, because the people working here in this post office are all a bunch of thieves.
Read the questions carefully. Note down your opinions and reactions to the questions. During the discussion with your teacher and classmates, offer your personal reaction and understanding of the text.

1. Do you think it is important to have faith? Why? Give reasons to support your answer.

2. Do you think it was justified on Rancho’s part to consider the post office employees as bunch of thieves? Discuss.

3. Do you think Rancho did the right thing by asking God for help? Discuss.

4. When people go through difficult times, they come out of difficult times stronger and more experienced. Do you think it is God’s way of empowering people to fulfill the life’s purpose on earth? Discuss and give reasons to support you answer.

5. What do you think of Rancho? Do you sympathize with him and his family? Discuss.

6. Did you anticipate that the story would end like this? What were your thoughts about the ending?

7. We always pray to God asking for His help. Describe a time when you asked God for something but HE answered your prayer in a way you had not anticipated. How did you feel? Were you happy the way things turned out to be?

8. If you had a chance to rewrite the story, how would the story end? Write a new ending of the story?
Choose one of the topics to reflect and write your diary on:
- What would you do if you were in Postmaster’s place?
- If you were the Postmaster, what would be your reaction after reading the second letter?
Personal Letter

Personal letters are the letters that are written to people we know such as friends, parents, siblings, cousins. Letters are not only written to inform but to strengthen the bond between two people writing to each other.

Some useful expressions for letter writing

Gratitude
- I'm just writing to thank you for ............
- It was very kind of you to ............
- Thanks very much for ............
- I am very grateful for ............

Giving advice
- Well, I thought about it and if I were you, I would ............
- Have you thought about ............
- In your last letter you said you weren't sure what course of action to take, I suggest ............
- I think you shouldn't ............
- In your last letter you asked me about ..........., I think ............
**Structure of Personal Letter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Date when the letter is written (top left).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Place where you are writing from (top right).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salutation &amp; Name</td>
<td>Greeting and the person’s name you are writing to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>The opening of the letter usually starts with how are you or refers to previous letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>The main part of the letter. It includes what you want to write to the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>The part indicates the letter is going to end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Delivering good news**
- I’m sure you will be happy to hear that ............
- I am sure that you’ll be interested to know that ............
- By the way, did you know that ............?
- OMG!! You'll never guess what happened!
- I am totally ecstatic to hear about ............
- I was happy beyond limits to read that ............

**Delivering bad news**
- I’m sorry but I have to tell you that ............
- Bad news, I’m afraid but no way to avoid it, so here it goes ............
- I’m extremely sorry to hear that ............
- It was heart wrenching to read about ............

**Asking for help**
- I wonder if you could help me.
- I hope it’s not too much to ask but ............
- I wonder if I could ask you a favor. Could you ............?

**Apologizing**
- I would like to apologize for ............
- I’m so sorry that ............
- Words are not enough to erase the pain I have given you but I want to say how sorry I am ............
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Complimentary close</strong></th>
<th>Short expressions like “love you”, “sincerely yours”, “love”.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signature</strong></td>
<td>Signature or initials of the writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postscript P.S.</strong></td>
<td>After thought in a letter. You begin with P.S. and end it with your initials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Examples of expressions used in personal letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Salutations</strong></th>
<th>“Dear”, “Dearest”, “sweetheart”, “darling”, “My dear”, “My love” etc. Salutations depend on how well you know the person you are writing to.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing</strong></td>
<td>“Yours”, “with love”, “sincerely yours”, “all the love”, “all the best”, “affectionately”, “much love”, “best wishes”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Starting the letter** | How are you?  
Hope this letter finds you......  
Thank you for your last letter.  
It was so good to hear from you.  
Sorry for answering late.  
I'm sorry I should have written earlier........  
Haven't heard from you in a while so I thought .....  
I am sorry to inform you that...... |
| **Conclusion** | I am looking forward to seeing you soon.  
I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.  
My best wishes for the coming test.  
See you.  
I will write soon.  
I will have to stop now.  
I am waiting for a quick reply.  
Looking forward to seeing you again.  
Bye. |
### Language in personal letter

| Sentence structure | - Accuracy of grammar is important.  
|                   | - Complete sentences are expected. 
|                   | - Slang can be used. 
|                   | - Use Contractions such as “I’ll”, “I’m”, “we’ll”. 
|                   | - Use personal pronouns such as “I”, “we”, “you”. 
|                   | - Use active voice. 
| Style:            | - Language use may be personal like first and second person pronouns. 
|                   | - Be warm. 
|                   | - Use person’s name you are writing to. 
|                   | - Vary sentence length. 
|                   | - Write in a natural, conversational style. 
|                   | - Let your personality shine through in your writing. 

(Bly, 2004).

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World’s longest letter
In 1952, a lady in Brooklyn, USA wrote a letter using narrow tape. She used 3,200 feet of the narrow tape. It took her one month to write the letter.

World’s shortest letter
In 1862, Victor Hugo wanted to know how his book “Les Miserables” was selling. He wrote to his publisher: “?”
The publisher replied: “!”
Example of a personal letter

12th January 2014
My Dear Lovely Siti,

Hello! How are you, sweetie? I know you are angry with me because I am writing to you after a long time. I am so sorry, please forgive me.

You know we are in Lombok right now. It is so beautiful beyond imagination. I am writing to you from this really cute little café on the Senggigi beach. As you know, mum loves shopping so she went and will be gone for hours. I took a rain check from shopping and decided to write to you while I enjoy my cup of coffee.

You know yesterday we went to Gili Nanggu Island; it is a beach on the southwest of Lombok. The place is awesome. It is so beautiful I couldn't believe my eyes. There are beautiful coral reefs everywhere. We went for snorkeling and we saw most amazing fish ever. I wish you were here; it would have been much more fun.

Mum's making sure we don't miss any sight in the whole city, so we've practically been everywhere.

I got to go, mum is here. I will see you soon.

Lots of love
XOXO

Lana

P.S. I'm bringing you lot of souvenirs and pictures!!
## Word Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>entire</td>
<td>/ɪnˈtʌɪə/</td>
<td>Whole, complete with no part left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pinnacle</td>
<td>/ˈpɪnək(ə)l/</td>
<td>Top pointed piece of a rock or the top most successful point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rapid</td>
<td>/ˈrɑːpid/</td>
<td>Something that happens at high speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confident</td>
<td>/ˈkɒnfɪd(ə)nt/</td>
<td>Feeling or showing confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inkling</td>
<td>/ɪŋkˈlɪŋ/</td>
<td>A slight knowledge or suspicion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predict</td>
<td>/prɪˈdɪkt/</td>
<td>Estimate something that will happen in future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretext</td>
<td>/priːˈtekst/</td>
<td>A reason given to justify an action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hail</td>
<td>/heɪl/</td>
<td>Pellets of frozen rain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absolutely</td>
<td>/ˈæbsəluːtli/</td>
<td>Totally with no limitation or restriction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disillusion</td>
<td>/dɪsəˈluːʃən/</td>
<td>Disappointment when finding out that something is not as good as one believed it to be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DID YOU KNOW?**

You can use contractions. For example: I'm, we've, they'll, I'd, etc. You can use informal language in personal letters. For example: gonna, wanna, xoxo, sweetie, etc.
A. Look at the phrases and match them with the purpose of letter.
The first one has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am so happy to share this with you</td>
<td>To apologize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you so much for remembering me</td>
<td>To ask for reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you know....</td>
<td>To ask a favor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am so sorry</td>
<td>Closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be waiting for your letter eagerly</td>
<td>To give advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I ask you for this favor</td>
<td>To give bad news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love always,</td>
<td>Changing topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think you should think it over before</td>
<td>To share some information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am so sorry but I have to tell you</td>
<td>To thank the person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That reminds me of....</td>
<td>To share good news</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. There are several mistakes (grammatical as well as in the format of the letter) in the letter given below. Highlight the mistakes and then rewrite the letter properly in the space provided.

Jl Cinangka Raya
2014
Ciputat - Tangerang Selatan

My dearest Lana,
Hey sweetie

I hope all is well with you. It's been a while since you moved to the new city for college. It is so sad that you are not few houses away anymore. I hope your new life is going well. It must be exciting living on your own in the hostel college. Everything is fine here. You know nothing much happens here. Have you already settled in? When is your college starting? Do you like the place you are living in? How is the neighborhood? I can't believe you live on boarding. I will be starting college soon as well but my parents insisted that I live at home.
Anyway, a bunch of us were talking about a reunion in summer holidays. So you better keep your calendar free. Nothing has been decided so suggestions are welcome!!!
That reminds me If you need anything let me know. I will gladly help. Have fun and don’t stay out late. we miss you so much!!!
P.S. I saw your mother the other day she misses you a lot and wishes that you called more often.
Take care and stay safe. Write as soon as you can.
Love always,
Jane
C. Fill in the blanks with words given below:

entire, pinnacle, rapid, confident, inkling, predict, absolutely,
pretext, hail, disillusioned

1. My brother is at the ___________ of his career. He is extremely happy.
2. The students lost the quiz competition in the ______________ fire round.
3. The __________ valley was flooded.
4. The grade 5 students were curious to know how meteorologists ____________ the weather.
5. Maria had a perfect _________________ to visit her aunt's house.
6. There is prediction that a heavy _____________ storm will come on Wednesday.
7. I
___________ agree with you on banning smoking in public places.
8. He is the most _____________ person I have ever met.
9. When magic tricks are revealed children become _________________.
10. I have absolutely no ______________ what you are talking about.
Active Conversation

Create dialogue for the one of situations given below. Using role-play approach, reenact the conversation with your classmates.

**Situation No: 1**

Post man : What is this? A letter addressed to GOD. Hahaha... I have to show this letter to the postmaster.
Post master : Yes, what is it?

Post man :
Post master :
Post man :

**Situation No: 2**

Postmaster wants to convince his immediate subordinates and friends to contribute money for Ranch.

Post master :
Subordinates :
Post master :
Friends :
Subordinates :
Friends :
Post master :

Di unduh dari: Bukupaket.com
Choose one of the following activities:

- Write a letter to your friend telling her/him all about your adventures during your trip to the Bromo mountain. Use the proper letter-writing format you learnt in the building blocks.
- Write a letter to your uncle telling him about the birthday party you organized for your grandmother. Use the proper letter-writing format you learnt in the building blocks.
Choose one of the activities given below:
- Use your imagination and draw a scene, which you think is very important for the story.
- Use your imagination and write a graphic novel/comic of the story.
- Write a letter to your parents thanking them for everything they have done for you.
- With a partner, create a skit (a short comical/funny drama) for your favorite scene from the story “letter to God”. Present it in front of your classmates and teacher.
- With a partner, create a postage stamp and a letter-writing pad. You can frame your postage stamp and display it in your class or if you want you can take it to the local post office and show it to the staff of post office.

Example of postage stamp and letter pad

DID YOU KNOW?

The first postage stamp was invented by a British teacher in 1840. The first two stamps were called Penny Black and Twopence Blue.
Parent Connection

At home, ask your parents or grandparents how they used to communicate with people who lived far away. Write this conversation in English and share it with your classmates and teacher.
I can do this.

Complete these statements:

1. The most interesting thing I learned in this chapter was ____________
2. The part I enjoyed most was ____________
3. I would like to find more about ____________
4. The hardest part in this chapter was ____________
5. I need to work harder at ____________

Read the statements below and tick (✓) the option that is most applicable to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The story was easy to understand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tell the difference between formal and personal letter.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can write personal letters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I like writing reflections.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I will continue writing reflections</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My plan to overcome difficulties of this chapter

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