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5th and 6th Class

Nurturing the Community



Do you believe that we have the power to grow a brighter future? Something fresher, more vibrant, a happier world? At An Post, we recognise that each of us holds the potential to nurture positive change and growth for our communities and beyond.

Picture a future where our collective efforts are like seeds sown in the soil of our communities. This year, we challenge you to share positive actions that can improve Irish communities for the future. It's not just about words on paper; it's about the tangible steps we can take to make a difference.

Whether it's fostering inclusivity for the elderly and vulnerable within our community, championing the principles of reduce, reuse, and recycle, setting up community spaces like gardens and libraries or starting clubs for sports or hobbies, your ideas for real-life, positive change are what we seek. We want to hear about initiatives, big or small, that can contribute to protecting and bettering our communities.

So, join us on this endeavour to contribute to the growth, wellbeing, and sustainability of our beloved Ireland. Let's sow the seeds for a future we can actively shape and be proud of!



An Post Writing Competition

To participate in the An Post "Nurturing the Community" Writing Competition, complete the following steps. The following pages will help your pupils create their individual entries!

Step 1: Explore how we can take action to build inclusive, caring and sustainable communities

Use the Teacher's Guide on the following pages to explore key questions related to positive community impact.

Step 2: Writing Prompt

Read the Sample Letter below. Have your pupils use the writing template to write their own letters about how they nurture their communities for the future. They can add a picture to their letter so we can see their ideas realised, too!

Step 3: Check your Work

Encourage your pupils to use our handwriting checklist to self-edit their work!

Step 4: Send it in!

- Fill out our entry form for each pupil and attach the handwritten copy of their entry.
- Send it to:
An Post Writing Competition
PO Box 13287
Freeport FDN7461
Dublin 1
- The deadline for entry submission is **22nd March 2024**.



We hope you're excited to participate in An Post's annual Writing Competition. We've put together a Teacher's Guide to help you facilitate letter writing in your class.

1. Introduction

- Show the slides to the pupils and ask prompting questions. The pupils can engage in think-pair-share and may need some prompting in places.
 - What does 'community' mean?
 - What communities are you a part of? (Think about your town, your clubs, places you like to visit)
 - What do you like about your communities?
 - How do you protect or look after your community?
 - How does it make you feel to be part of a community?
 - Why is it important to be in a community?
- **An Post Video**
 - Show the pupils the video. Question pupils for their understanding.
- **Reflect on the video**
 - How do An Post leave their mark on communities?
 - Who is affected by the work of An Post?
 - How do you leave your mark on your community?
 - Who do you help? Who are you kind to? Why?
 - What else might you do to help others in your community?
 - How could you leave the biggest and best mark on your community?
- **Define key words related to the lesson plan:**
 - **Nurture:** "giving love, care, and attention to help things, people or communities grow and be happy".
 - **Community:** "a group of people living in a particular area or who have common interests such as the sport they play".
 - **Sustainable:** "taking care of planet Earth so it stays healthy for a long, long time".
 - **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** "ways to be kinder to planet Earth and to make less waste".
 - **Biodiversity:** "the different plants and animals living in nature".

- **Diversity:** "having friends who are different in cool ways".
 - **Inclusion:** "making sure everyone has a chance to join in and play together".
- **Discuss** (as a whole class, in groups or pairs) what the pupils themselves can individually do (and what change they could inspire in their communities) to nurture their communities in terms of: sustainability, biodiversity, reducing, reusing and recycling, diversity, inclusion and reading for all. Use the slides to scaffold the discussion.

2. Reading and Writing

- Read the sample letter to the pupils. If possible, display it to them too at the same time, so that they can see the layout of the letter.
- Question the pupils on the letter on slides:
 - What are the problems Principal Jones mentions?
 - What solutions can the pupils think of?
 - What ideas can pupils think of to nurture their communities in terms of: sustainability, biodiversity, reducing, reusing and recycling, diversity, inclusion and reading for all?
 - How could pupils craft a letter to show how actions they take, or how motivating others to get involved, can nurture their communities?
- **Have pupils compose a letter discussing the ways in which we can nurture initiatives to make our communities more sustainable, inclusive, and caring for the future.**
- Pupils use the template provided to write their letter.
- Pupils self-check their letters, using the letter writing checklist provided.

3. Entry Submission

- Write the final version of the letter in the template provided. A copy could be made of the letters and retained for the pupils to display in an area in the classroom or shared with parents.
- Complete the entry form and send entries to the address on page 1 of this document.



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Sample Letter

Read and discuss the letter below. Think about actions that can be taken to nurture communities based on Principal Jones' letter.

Dear 5th and 6th Class Pupils,

25/02/24

I am writing this letter today to seek your help. I know you are a kind and caring group of pupils. You value the world around us and others in society, especially those that are sometimes forgotten or on the fringes of society. I am writing to you all now to appeal to your knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

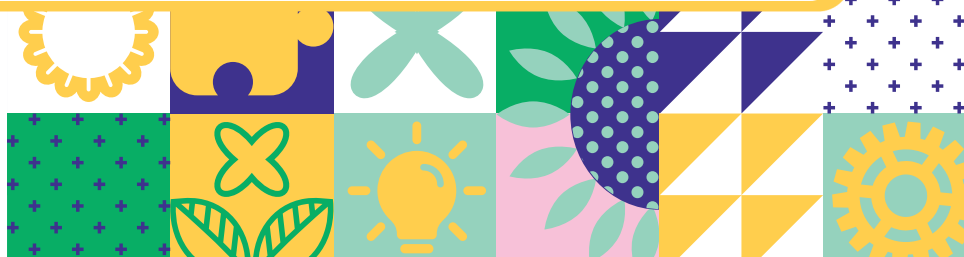
Firstly, the proprietor of the local nursing home, Blooming Meadows, has recently reached out and contacted me for some help regarding integration activities for the residents in the home. Many have families who are living far away and don't get visited very often. He was looking for some help in getting involved. He said that visits or some kind of engagement with the community outside of the nursing home would revolutionise the feeling for the residents, many of whom currently feel lonely. He suggested some gardening programmes, or linking in with our school so that we can teach something you're learning about in school to the residents, and they can in turn teach you a valuable skill.

Second of all, our local library has been in contact with me about our literacy initiatives, and how we could involve families and communities more in our literacy projects. In our school, parents sometimes come in for reading in younger classes, and we do "Reading Buddies", where 3rd and 4th Class read with the Junior and Senior Infants every second week. However, we are looking to do bigger and better things next term. We want to share the gift of literacy and remind all of our pupils how literacy can bring us together. We would like to get families involved, and even extend ideas to the wider community too, as well as linking in with our library - a real community event! How can we involve all pupils? How can we excite people in our community?

Finally, I would like to pick your brains about how we can make our school greener. We might think of ways to reduce energy consumption in our school, dispose of our waste in a better way, and promote healthier ways to travel to school. I have some ideas already, such as installing solar panels on the roof - but we might need to raise money for that. This is very important to us all, as it will have a big impact on our school community in the future. Can you think of anything else that we could do to build a greener community among the pupils, families and teachers in the school?

We have a strong legacy of being a wonderful school community and I am very proud of that. In your responses, I want you to think about those in our broader local community who are less fortunate, or less able than others. How can we make the initiatives more accessible for them? If you have any ideas about any one of these areas, or even all three, I would greatly appreciate a reply outlining your thoughts. We know that you have the power to plant the seeds of change for a brighter tomorrow, and we all need your help.

Thanking you in advance,
Principal Jones



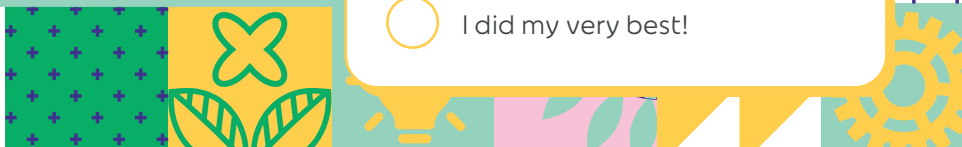
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My Letter



A large rectangular area with horizontal green lines for writing a letter.

- I wrote using my best handwriting and used spaces.
- I used capital letters at the beginning of each sentence.
- I used a punctuation mark at the end of each sentence.
- I tried my best when spelling my words.
- I did my very best!



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Draw a picture for
your letter here!



A large, empty rectangular box with a green border, intended for drawing a picture for a letter.

