

# Session Guide: My experience in Community Based Learning

## Session Outline

### Description

In this session learners are asked to reflect on their experience so far with Community Based Learning (CBL), and write a short letter to a relative or friend (real or fictional) who is away and they have not seen for a while.

In the first part of the session learners will be working in small groups to discuss how to structure an informal letter. The discussion will then be carried out with the whole group and the teacher, and enable developing a general template that everybody may use.

In the second part of the session learners will work individually to write the letter. They should touch both positive aspects and challenges encountered so far, and possibly describe how they faced these challenges.

In the third part of the session some learners will share their work with the whole group, and receive feedback. Time permitting, the session will be concluded with a general discussion on the learners' experiences.

### Session Objectives

The objectives of this session are to:

- Reflect on their experiences so far with CBL.
- Identify the structure of an informal letter.
- Be able to organise ideas and draw a plan and understand the importance of planning before writing.
- Write a short letter.
- Provide constructive criticism to other learners' work.

### Expected Outcomes

By the end of the session learners will have:

- Planned a short letter.
- Written a short letter.
- Commented on other learners' work.
- Reflected on and discussed their experiences on CBL.



## Areas involved

- Language
  - Writing
- Life skills
  - Self-awareness
  - Communication
  - Study and organisational skills

## Activity: Structure an informal letter

### Objectives

To understand how an informal letter should be written.

### Expected Outcomes

Learners will have thought of and come up with a general structure of an informal letter.

### Teaching Instructions

Learners will be working in small groups (4 or 5) to discuss the structure of an informal letter. Lead a discussion with the whole group and define an agreed general template for everybody to use.

### Suggested Guidelines

There is no set format for an informal letter. But there is a general pattern, some conventions that people usually follow, .

- **Date**
- **Greeting** (Dear ...)
- **Introductory paragraph.** This sets the tone for the whole letter. You might begin by asking the recipient about their well being. Or you may say that you hope the letter finds them in good health and great spirits. The opening of informal letters should be casual and comforting.
- **Body of the letter.** The letter overall should maintain a friendly tone. But you have to adjust the language and the wordings according to who you are writing to. One way to get the tone of your letter right is to remember how you talk to the person in a conversation and then apply the same style and sentiments to the letter.



- **Conclusion.** In the final paragraph sum up the reason for writing the letter. include a meaningful and affectionate goodbye to the reader. Don't forget to invite the reader to write back or reply to your letter, this shows an intention to keep the conversation going.

## Student Instructions

In this session you are asked to reflect on your personal experiences so far with Community Based Learning (CBL), and write a short letter to a relative or friend (real or fictional) who is away and you have not seen for a while.

Before you start, you should work in small groups to discuss the structure of a personal letter. You should consider the different sections of the letter, what it should include, what should be in each section (beginning, body of the letter, end), how a first line would sound, and what you would write on the last line, and what the tone of the letter should be.

After thinking about your structure, discuss with the whole group and together try to agree on a general template that you could use.

## Activity: Writing

### Objectives

To be able to write a short informal letter. To be able to follow a plan for their writing.

### Expected Outcomes

To write a short informal letter about their experiences of CBL.

## Student Instructions

Write your informal letter, trying to follow the plan set out. Mention both positive aspects and challenges faced during the week, and possibly describe how you faced these challenges.

Remember that the plan should not be fixed and can be changed if you get new ideas while you are writing, but you should try to stick to it as a guiding post.



## Activity: Sharing and Discussion

### Objectives

To be able to present their work and receive constructive criticism. To be able to criticise a piece of work identifying good points, interesting points, and areas for improvement.

### Expected Outcomes

Some Learners share their writing and the rest comment on it. All learners engage in a discussion about positive experiences and challenges faced during the week, possibly suggesting areas for improvement.

### Teaching Instructions

A few students are to share their writing with the rest of the group. The group will then provide constructive feedback, focusing on good points, interesting points, and areas for improvement. Summarise the criticism, making sure to highlight positive aspects. Encourage all learners to share positive experiences and challenges faced during the week.

### Suggested Guidelines

- It is important to help learners develop critical thinking skills. These include analysing their peers' work carefully, focusing on clear and specific points, both good and areas for improvement.
- Ensure that learners should feel comfortable giving and receiving feedback from their peers and they feel safe to do so by highlighting positives and making sure that negatives are presented as opportunities for growth or improvement.

### Student instructions

- A volunteer or chosen student will share their work with the rest of the group.
- A number of students will provide feedback on good points, interesting points, and areas for improvement.
- Repeat for as many students as possible, time-permitting.
- The whole group should engage in discussions about positive experiences and challenges faced during the week, possibly suggesting areas of improvement.

