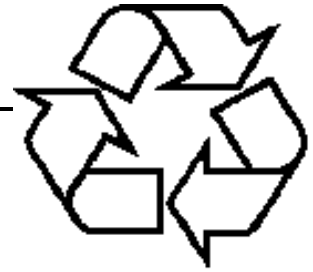


# Close the Loop

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## Buy Recycled Business Letters Grades 6-8

**Materials:** Business letter example (included), editing mark handout (included), grading rubric (included), examples of packaging.

**Activity Time:** 20 minutes (lesson), 50 minutes (follow-up)

**Concepts Taught:** Letter-writing, sentence structure, proofreading and editing

**Correlations to NCSCOS: Grade 6:** ELA Objectives 2.01, 3.02, 3.03, Competency Goal 6;

**Grade 7:** ELA Objectives 2.01, 3.02, Competency Goal 6; **Grade 8:** ELA Objectives 2.01, 3.02, 3.03, Competency Goal 6.

### Objectives:

- Students will understand the phrase “Buy Recycled” and realize its importance.
- Students will write a business letter to persuade a business or organization to buy recycled.
- Students will utilize proofreading and editing skills in preparation of a final draft letter.

### Background:

- The three-arrow recycling symbol represents the three steps of recycling: 1) collection of recyclables, 2) manufacturing new products from recyclables, and 3) buying recycled.
- The phrase “Close the Loop” refers to the idea that buying products with recycled content finishes the loop made by the three arrows in the recycling symbol.
- **The three-arrow recycling symbol does not always indicate that a product is made from recycled content.**
  - It can simply be a reminder to recycle or can indicate that the product is recyclable.
  - There may also be labels on the product that describe the amount of post-consumer material included in the product. Post-consumer content is material that has been through consumer hands, or material that people have used and recycled. Other recycled content is usually factory leftovers such as material left over after a box has been cut from a pattern or items reclaimed from the factory floor.
- Buying recycled content material saves natural resources such as trees, land, and energy.
- Some examples of recycled content products include: newspapers, bathroom tissue, or notebook paper made from recycled paper; aluminum cans, pie tins, or bleachers made from recycled aluminum cans; fleece jackets, toys, T-shirts, lumber and playground equipment made from recycled plastic bottles.

### Lesson:

1. Review the concepts above with students. Remind them what the three-arrow recycling symbol means and why it is important to close the loop and buy recycled.
2. Show students examples of the three-arrow recycling symbol or label on packaging and products.

## Close the Loop

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3. Explain to students that they will write a persuasive letter to a business or organization asking them to buy and use recycled content products. Brainstorm names of businesses and ideas to write about and map them on the board. Ideas could include reasons why buying recycled is important, thinking of examples of recycled content products applicable to a particular business or organization, and explaining the phrase “close the loop.”
4. Review the format of a business letter using the provided template. Remind students that they must maintain a professional tone throughout the letter, while still sounding persuasive and passionate about the topic. Students should explain why they are writing and express their feelings toward buying recycled, as well as give opinions and suggestions for implementation at the business. Letters should end on a positive note, with students thanking the organization for their attention. A sample business letter is provided.
5. Review commonly used editing marks on the provided handout and explain to students that they will use these marks to edit another student’s letter.
6. Have students write a rough draft of their letter. Students should then exchange letters with a partner and proofread each other’s work using appropriate editing marks. Instruct students to write their revised letters on final stationery. Letters can be typed, printed, and edited using computers. Letters could be sent to the PTA or principal of the school, to the Wake County Public School System, the school board, or a parent’s place of work. Students can also use the Internet to research companies that sell recycled content products and list those companies in their letters.

### **Extension:**

Students can use the Internet to research the economic and environmental issues associated with products made from recycled content and virgin material. Books are also useful but may be outdated in terms of correct data.

Useful sites:

- <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Schools/WasteReduce/Purchasing/>
- <http://www.mass.gov/epp/info/whyeppp.htm>
- <http://www.buyrecycled.com/facts.htm>
- <http://www.americarecyclesday.org/>

## Close the Loop

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### Business Letter Template

Your street address

Your city, state, and zip

Date

-----Leave one blank line-----

First and last name of the person to whom you are writing

Their street address

Their city, state, zip

-----Leave one blank line-----

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss first and last name:

-----Leave one blank line-----

The text will be typed here. Business letters typically are not indented. You should maintain a professional tone throughout the letter, while still sounding persuasive and passionate about the topic. Explain why you are writing to this business and why you chose to write to them.

Express your feelings toward buying recycled and why you think it is important for individuals and businesses to buy recycled.

-----Leave one blank line between each paragraph-----

Your second paragraph should offer assistance in some way. You could give opinions and suggestions for how the business could use recycled content products, or list examples of products that company could use. End on a positive note by thanking the company for their time.

-----Leave one blank line-----

Sincerely,

Your signature

\*\*\*If your letter is typed, leave three blank lines between the closing and your typed name. This space will be where you sign your name.\*\*\*\*\*

## Close the Loop

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112 Elm Street  
Anytown, NC 27987  
May 2, 2005

Mr. David Smith  
4378 Main Street  
Anytown, NC 27897

Dear Mr. Smith:

Our seventh grade environmental education class recently had a speaker talk about recycling and buying recycled products. It is important to buy products with recycled material so that the recycling cycle works. I'd like to see our school begin buying recycled products for our students and staff.

Some of the products that we use in our school that could be made from recycled products include notebook paper, pencils, rulers, bleachers, bathroom tissue and playground equipment. You can be sure that you are purchasing materials made from recycled products if you see the three arrow recycling symbol or the company indicates on the product that it is made from recycled materials. I think we could save trees and energy and reduce the amount of trash our schools produce if we make a commitment to buy recycled products. I do hope you will give this idea some serious consideration. Thank you for your time and please contact me if I can help you get this project underway.

Sincerely,

*Mary Jones*

Mary Jones

## Close the Loop

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### Editing Marks:

### Examples:

Add a word or words



Omit a word or words



Add a period



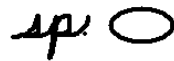
Add a comma



Start new paragraph



Correct the spelling



Make a capital letter



Close space



Add space



Take out word



Transpose words



# Close the Loop

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## Grading Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Writing Process</b>	Work shows evidence of all stages of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.	Work shows evidence of some stages of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.	Work shows evidence of few stages of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.	Work shows little or no evidence that the writing process was used.
<b>Neatness</b>	The final draft of the letter is readable, clean, neat and attractive. It is free of erasures and crossed-out words.	The final draft of the letter is readable, neat and attractive. It may have one or two erasures and/or crossed out words, but they are not distracting.	The final draft of the letter is readable and may have several erasures and/or crossed out words, but they are not distracting.	The final draft is not neat or attractive.
<b>Organization</b>	The letter is very well organized. One statement follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The letter is fairly well organized. One statement may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The letter is difficult to follow. The statements and transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas and statements seem to be randomly arranged.
<b>Spelling and Punctuation</b>	There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft. Businesses and names are spelled consistently throughout.	There are few spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.	There are several spelling and punctuation errors in the final draft.	The final draft has many spelling and punctuation errors.
<b>Purpose and Audience</b>	Demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose and audience. The student uses specific vocabulary to provide a persuasive tone.	Demonstrates a general understanding of purpose and audience. The student uses a persuasive tone.	Demonstrates little understanding of purpose and audience. The student uses a somewhat persuasive tone.	Demonstrates no understanding of purpose and audience. The student lacks use of a persuasive tone.
<b>Point of View and Sentence Structure</b>	Maintains consistent point of view and organization. Uses a variety of sentence types.	Maintains a mostly consistent point of view with a variety of sentence types.	Maintains inconsistent point of view with little variety in sentence types.	Lacks a clear point of view with no sentence variety.
<b>Requirements</b>	All of the written requirements were met. Format is indicative of a business letter	Almost all (about 90%) of the written requirements were met. Format is indicative of a business letter	Most (about 75%) of the written requirements were met, but several were not. Format is somewhat indicative of a business letter.	Many requirements were not met. Format is not indicative of a business letter.