

The Business Letter Meets “Flowers for Algernon”

You’ve already received information on the required business letter and envelope format. Now, you need a reason to write a business letter. You’ll find that reason somewhere within “Flowers for Algernon.”

Possible Business Letter Topics (each arrow is a separate topic):

Write a letter to Donnegan’s Plastic Box Company to:

- ⇒ complain about Charlie’s hostile work environment.
- ⇒ complain about the way Joe Carp and Frank Reilly harass Charlie.

Write a letter to Miss Kinnian to:

- ⇒ complain—Miss Kinnian should never have recommended Charlie for the experiment in the first place.
- ⇒ make Miss Kinnian feel better about Charlie’s death.

Write a letter to your textbook’s publisher to:

- ⇒ praise the selection of the three illustrations on pages 271, 287, & 290 with regard to what they’ve added to your understanding of Charlie.
- ⇒ forward a letter to Daniel Keyes, the author, to thank him for helping you understand how difficult it must be to have a low IQ and how to treat people with low IQs.

Write a letter to the Medical Malpractice Board to:

- ⇒ discuss your reasons for filing suit against Drs. Nemur and Strauss.
- ⇒ stop medical research in the state—use the negatives from Charlie’s experience to make your case.

Write a letter to the hospital to:

- ⇒ have the medical privileges of Drs. Nemur and Strauss revoked.
- ⇒ hold it responsible for the doctors allowing Charlie to agree to the experimental surgery in the first place.

Write a letter to Daniel Keyes, the author, to:

- ⇒ ask if he really meant to use his story to criticize the medical profession.
- ⇒ suggest a new, expanded ending for the story.

Write a letter to Drs. Nemur and Strauss to:

- ⇒ make sure they understand the real consequences of their actions (Charlie’s regression).
- ⇒ make them justify the scientific and moral value of the experimental surgery.

Make up your own topic, but make sure you okay it with me before starting to write.

SEMI-BLOCK FORM

HEADING

1709 Harrison Street
Davenport, IA 52803-4811
17 December 2003

Nancy R. Kinnian, Teacher
Adult Night School
% Jefferson Adult Education
2392 East George Street
New York, New York 43920-9875

INSIDE ADDRESS

Dear Miss Kinnian:

GREETING/SALUTATION

BODY

I, too, was saddened to hear of the death of Charles Gordon. His death was unnecessary and untimely. However, knowing what I know of Charlie, I think he was better off after the surgery—even though it failed.

Charlie's one true desire was to be smart. After the surgery, he learned how to be self-sufficient. He learned a number of foreign languages. He was able to use his intelligence to discover something important for science. With his increased intelligence, he was able to document the rise from a 68 IQ to a 204 IQ in his journal entries. He showed the world what it was like to live "peering through the keyhole" and to tower over others intellectually. His journey, though disastrous personally, can help others understand both worlds and change their negative behaviors toward people of low intelligence.

Don't feel sorry for Charlie. He chose to be smart, and he attained that goal. He was a truly remarkable person who will be missed.

CLOSING

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

SIGN YOUR NAME HERE IN BLUE OR BLACK INK

Mrs. Katherine Searle

BLOCK FORM

1709 Harrison Street
Davenport, IA 52803-4811
17 December 2004

HEADING

Paul M. Smith, M.D.
American Medical Association
2809 West 107th Street
New York, NY 76903-2351

INSIDE ADDRESS

Dear Dr. Smith:

Greeting/Salutation

BODY



Recently, Dr. Nemur and Dr. Strauss performed experimental surgery on Charles Gordon to triple his 68 IQ. Because these two doctors did not follow the proper research method, Charles Gordon has suffered and died. The surgery was a failure in the lab and should never have been tried on a human—especially not one whose low IQ didn't allow for informed consent. Charles had the mental age of a 7-12-year-old. How could he have been legally allowed to make any decision concerning any experimental surgery?

Drs. Nemur and Strauss had a responsibility to Charles, a responsibility they ignored to gain fame and status for themselves. I would like a full review of the surgery that resulted in Gordon's untimely death. Gordon had a low IQ and no guardian to look out for him. I plan to look out for him—even after his death. I'm enclosing all the medical records that pertain to the experimental surgery. I expect to hear from you no later than February 15, 2005.

Sincerely,

CLOSING

SIGN YOUR NAME HERE IN BLUE OR BLACK INK

Mrs. Katherine Searle

SIGNATURE

Enc.: Medical Records

C: Malpractice Insurance of New York

**SAMPLE ENVELOPE
ALL CAPS
NO PUNCT**

SEARLE
1709 HARRISON STREET
DAVENPORT IA 52803-4811



PAUL M SMITH MD
AMA
1809 WEST 107TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 76903-2351