

## Activity

## A GREAT BIG THANKYOU!

Write a thankyou letter to somebody you are grateful to, explaining how they have made a difference to your life recently.

## What should I do?

Take some thinking time

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all become much better aware of the important people in our lives and probably appreciate them a lot more. We are missing spending time with friends and members of our families, but we've also noticed enormous numbers of people who we probably don't know as well, some we may never have met, and we've recognised what they do for us – our keyworkers. There are those in the NHS who are looking after us so well, care-workers, supermarket staff, pharmacists, delivery drivers, postal workers, men and women keeping public transport going and taxi drivers, our teachers and many more...

Take a moment to consider everybody who helps *you*. Who has made a difference to your life recently, either directly or by doing something for someone close to you or your community?

Choose one person, or one group of people, that you are particularly grateful to and who you think deserves to be told this. You might want to consider men and women who work in your local hospital, pharmacy or care home, supermarket or food store, driving buses, your teachers, postman, etc. Make a note of all the reasons to be thankful to them. Your thanks will mean more to them if you can also think of something particular they have done - one or two ways in which they have specifically made a difference to you over the past few weeks.

Draft your letter or thankyou card

Planning your writing first will make a real difference to how clearly you can communicate to your reader. It's important that they fully understand why you are writing to them, and that they are made to feel special. Jot down the sections you will write and decide on the best order. You may find it useful to include the following:

- **Who you are.** Do NOT include personal details if you are writing to a stranger; you can, for example, just say you are a nine year-old who lives locally, but not mention your name or street, etc. You should check with whomever looks after you to see what information they are happy for you to share.
- A brief **introduction to why you are writing.** You may want to set this in context, e.g. how difficult things are right now and that it's taught you about the importance of our keyworkers. Even simply telling your reader that you want to say thank you is fine.
- Describe **something the person or group of people has done** that has benefitted you. Explain how this has affected you. Perhaps say why it's made you want to write the letter.
- You could think of **some more great things the reader has done** or is doing and describe these, again explaining why it means a lot to you.
- You may want to end by **wishing your reader something nice.**
- Think about how you will **sign off** on your letter and consider your own safety with strangers. You could sign yourself 'A well-wisher', 'A friend', 'A grateful customer', etc.

Write the first draft of your letter or card to say thank you.

Present and deliver your finished thankyou

Re-read your thankyou and improve it. Think about how to make the purpose really clear and what you have said to make the recipient feel special and as though this is a personal thanks. Proof-read your improved letter to check and correct spellings.

You may want to design a thankyou card yourself, or create an attractive border on whatever paper you will write on.

Copy out your thankyou letter or card in neat, making sure the recipient will be able to easily read your handwriting.

How will you get your thankyou to the person/people it is intended for? You can look up the addresses of local hospitals and shops, businesses, schools and transport firms, etc. online. If you'd like to post your letter, you can buy stamps from Royal Mail, either their online site or via an app, or you may prefer to deliver your letter yourself while out for your daily exercise.

Share your work

How might you share your work with your friends and your teacher(s)? Can you film yourself reading your letter, or take photographs, then email or upload to a shared area? Could you create a copy of your work to post?

You can tweet what you've been up to using the Twitter handle @BabcockLDPEng and the hashtag #BabcockEnglishAtHome.

**IMPORTANT:** If you decide to share your finished work publicly, just remember everything you have been taught about staying safe online, and do check with the person who looks after you before posting anything.

Things that  
could help me

You can find a good online dictionary at <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>

The government produced a list of what they call 'critical workers'. You could look at this with someone and discuss it to get some ideas of the sorts of people you might like to write to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>.

And... The word 'thankyou' can be confusing! If it is used as a noun or adjective, e.g. *I am sending a thankyou*, or *I'll write a thankyou message*, it is one word but if you are using it as a verb and thanking someone, e.g. *Thank you, NHS workers*, it is two! Try not to get muddled and make sure you check this when proofreading before you copy out your final letter or card. (We had to check our own spelling when writing this activity over and over to make sure we had it right each time!)

Change it up!  
...Go further!

- A) You might want to include some treats for the person receiving your letter – a couple of sweets, a teabag for their tea break, a picture you've drawn, etc.
- B) Perhaps you could think about a person closer to you that you know much better, e.g. a grandparent, your own parents, your teacher, a friend, a keyworker that you know and trust, a helpful neighbour. If you choose to write to them, you will be able to include more personal details, maybe tell them a bit about what you've been up to recently, etc.

Notes for  
parents and  
teachers

In this activity, your child is asked to write to someone or a group of people that they may not know. They will be able to do this and remain safe as long as they think very carefully about what to tell the recipient and what not to share. DO make sure to read their drafted letter before they go any further: you may want to discuss personal safety and suggest some alternative ways of phrasing things (some examples have been given in the task's instructions).

The [National Literacy Trust](https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/mydearnewfriend/) is currently supporting a project called 'My Dear New Friend' in which children are encouraged to write letters to the residents of a local care home. You might like to investigate this and take a look at the support materials NLT has produced: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/mydearnewfriend/>. This is such a lovely idea and a letter would no doubt be appreciated but, if you would like your child to have a go, you should realise they will need to share more personal information, e.g. their likes and dislikes and the sorts of fun things they've been getting up to. It is REALLY important that you talk about this first and check you are happy with everything your child writes to their 'dear new friend' so that you keep them completely safe.