

**A LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

What do you feel strongly about? Should the whale in your local sea park be freed? Perhaps your school-bus stop should be moved closer to your house. One way to express your opinion is to write a *letter to the editor*. A **letter to the editor** is a public letter to the editor of a newspaper or a magazine. The following letter is to the editor of a school newspaper.

1475 Broadway  
Chicago, IL 60605  
November 21, 1994

The Editor  
The Courier  
120 Union Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60605

Dear Editor:

Our school's parent-teacher organization has just finished its yearly fund drive. Now its members are about to vote on how to spend the money. I think the money should be spent on repairing our outdoor basketball court.

Today, the court is full of large piles of smelly trash. Ugly weeds have grown up between cracks, and big holes in the pavement make the court unsafe. Last month the principal closed the court. Now students can't play there any more.

Basketball is a very popular sport in our school. Last year, more than one hundred students tried out for the basketball team. Without this outdoor court, however, many students won't be able to practice and then might not make the team. Many students now attend our games, but without good players, we might not win as much. Then students would quit coming to the games. Thus, a better court would help our school spirit.

The court should be repaired because a better court would also give students a safe place to play after school. Our school does not have a playground. Without this basketball court, students sometimes play on nearby crowded sidewalks or in the streets.

A better outdoor basketball court would help the school and the students. The money should be spent to repair the court.

Maribeth Williams

## Thinking About the Model

The writer of the model letter on page 59 expresses a strong opinion. Now that you've read the letter, think about how the writer persuades others. Answer the following questions about the model letter.

1. An *opinion* is a writer's personal belief. It cannot be proved true or false, and people have different feelings about it. What opinion does the writer of the model letter feel strongly about?

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2. Reasons are one way to convince others about your opinion. A *reason* tells *why* something should be done. The writer of the model letter gives two reasons for repairing the outdoor basketball court. The first reason is that a better court will improve school spirit. What is the second reason?

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3. A letter to the editor also supports the writer's opinion with facts. A *fact* can be checked and proved true. You can check facts through observation or in a source such as an encyclopedia. One fact in the model letter on page 59 is that the basketball court has piles of trash on it. What are three other facts in the model letter?

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4. Words that affect people's feelings can also persuade others. In the model letter, the writer uses the words *ugly* and *smelly* to convince readers that the courts need attention. What are two other such words the writer uses to do this?

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5. Ideas in a letter to the editor are usually arranged in order of importance. What is the most important reason in the model letter? Where does the writer place it in the letter?

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6. Letters to the editor sometimes end with a restatement of the opinion. What sentence is the author's restatement?

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