



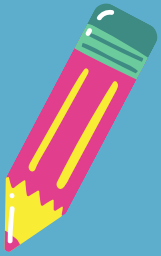
**CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE**

**WRITING THROUGH TIME**

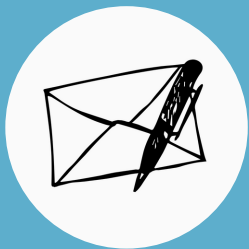
**LOST LETTERS PROJECT**



Hello! Thanks for taking time to look at this Creative Pack.



In this pack is a creative activity for you to do. We hope it gets you thinking and using your imagination.



This activity is part of the Lost Letters Project. A project working with people across the country thinking about history and letters from Surrey.



This project uses words and art to develop new ideas from old letters. The old letters come from Surrey History Centre.



This pack has been made for you by an artist called Tom from It's Not Your Birthday But... who writes poems inspired by history.



# WRITING THROUGH TIME

## WHERE DID THIS IDEA COME FROM?



Writing letters has been popular for thousands of years, all over the world. People share things about themselves and their lives in letters and ask questions. Often people ask their family and friends for the things they want, need or would like to do together.



The idea for this Creative Challenge comes from old letters which are kept safe at Surrey History Centre. They have thousands of old letters there. By looking at old letters, we can get ideas to help us write new letters.



Letters are a great way to connect with people. They can remind people of friendship and loved ones, no matter where they are.



"Well you will soon be back in Stoneleigh. Perhaps, if you like, when you come back and if the weather permits, we might go for bike rides or walks"

This is a line from an old letter at Surrey History Centre.

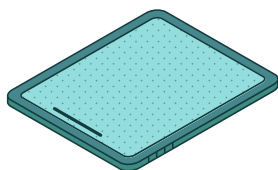
In this creative challenge we will...

Write a letter

We might use old letters to give us ideas for our letter.



## 1. You will need...



- A piece of paper
- A pencil or pen

Or you could do it on

- A laptop
- An I-pad

## 2. Let's look at some old letters

Old letters could give us ideas about what to write in our letter.

These letters have been written in the last 150 years!



Click these links to listen to letters:

[1909, A woman in Wimbledon too old to work asks for coal to keep warm](#)

[A mum writing to her son in the army during WW2](#)

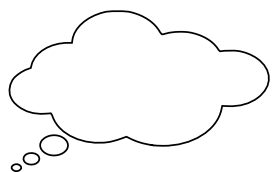
[A woman in her 30's writing to her friend](#)

[A man writes about a lot of hammering noise!](#)

[A woman asking about someone selling things at her door](#)

Here are some words from an old letter to a friend. They might give us ideas for our letter.

They are words from a real letter that a lady named Mary wrote to her friend Vera in the summer of 1944....



"I hope I don't repeat myself in my letters, but I can never remember what I have written..."



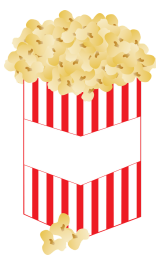
"Do you remember the potty things we used to get up to? The thing I remember most was playing 'cat and mouse' .... You know, jumping on drains and squeaking."



"Thank heavens it has left off raining. It has poured all day but now, 8.10pm the sun is shining."



"The only movie I saw..., with Gene Kelly in it, was "The Cross of Lorraine."



"I like John Garfield, but with regard to Errol Flynn... I think he stinks. For the minute I can't remember anyone special who I like."

"I am definitely going to see "The Story of Dr Wassell" next Saturday afternoon."

### 3. Think about....



- Who would you like to write to?
- What would you like to ask someone in a letter?
- What have you been doing recently that you would like to tell someone about?
- Is there something small you would like to ask someone for, that they could send you? E.g. a photo or a leaf from their garden.

### 4. Write your letter!

You could also:

- Write a card
- Write a postcard
- Send a drawing



Dear Andy

Thank you for telling me to watch Hobbs and Shaw. It was silly and quite long but was still fun to watch last week when it was raining.

If you have any more movie recommendations please let me know as I'm watching a lot of TV at the moment.

Hopefully we can see each other and go for a walk in the park or by the river soon.

All the best

Tom



This is a letter Tom wrote to his friend. You can [listen to it here](#).



## Other Ideas...

If you have some more time and would like to do more you could...

- Listen to one of the old letters and write a reply

To Charlotte

I am sorry to hear that you are ill and cold. How much coal do you need for the winter? You do not say in your letter how old you are, please excuse me but, how old are you Charlotte?

Nobody should be forced to be cold, regardless of how old they are. I will make sure you get the coal you need. Is there anything else that you need help with, given your condition?

Things have changed a lot and you do not need to suffer alone.

Here to help  
Tom

Here is an example. This is a letter Tom wrote to the old woman who was asking for coal in a letter from the archives.



[You can listen to it here.](#)



## 6. When you have finished...



- Celebrate your creativity!



- Post your letter if you want to.



- Choose if you want to tell [It's Not Your Birthday But... \(INyBB\)](#) about what you created. It's up to you.

## Who are It's Not Your Birthday But... (INyBB)?



INyBB connect people through letters, words and art. They work with people in many parts of the community including schools, prisons & care homes. They believe in creativity, sharing things and connecting people. [www.itsnotyourbirthdaybut.com](http://www.itsnotyourbirthdaybut.com)



If you choose to share your work with INyBB it's important to know you are also giving them permission to share your work with other people on social media and in an exhibition connected to the Lost Letters Project. Your work will be seen by people around Surrey and the UK. Any questions? Contact us here: [itsnotyourbirthdaybut@gmail.com](mailto:itsnotyourbirthdaybut@gmail.com)

