

Prison Letter Assignment

“Remember that hope is a powerful weapon even when all else is lost.”

- Nelson Mandela, written in a letter to his wife Winnie seven years into his imprisonment

April 2, 1969

Assignment: Write a letter from the perspective of an individual serving a life sentence in prison. Write to a family member, loved one, or friend. The letter must include the usual elements, such as date, salutation, body, and closing. Please *handwrite* this assignment.

Length: 500 words

Before you begin:

Watch and read these selected excerpts:

1. Editors, T. (2018, July 06). 'Hope Is a Powerful Weapon': Unpublished Mandela Prison Letters. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/06/opinion/sunday/nelson-mandela-unpublished-prison-letters-excerpts.html>

Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/06/opinion/sunday/nelson-mandela-unpublished-prison-letters-excerpts.html>

2. Jones, T. (2018, July 06). What Mandela Lost. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/06/opinion/sunday/nelson-mandela-tayari-jones-prison-letters.html>

Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/06/opinion/sunday/nelson-mandela-tayari-jones-prison-letters.html>

3. A day of my life. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://apw.dhinitiative.org/islandora/object/apw:12343298?solr_nav\[id\]=6bfb877f8b2a16ad1896&solr_nav\[page\]=0&solr_nav\[offset\]=5](https://apw.dhinitiative.org/islandora/object/apw:12343298?solr_nav[id]=6bfb877f8b2a16ad1896&solr_nav[page]=0&solr_nav[offset]=5)

Link:

https://apw.dhinitiative.org/islandora/object/apw%3A12343298?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=6bfb877f8b2a16ad1896&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=5

Consider:

- Who is your audience? What is your purpose?
- What is the rhetorical situation?
- What pieces of information, such as the day-to-day details of your life or the things you miss about home, might you share?
- What might you ask for in a return letter? What kind of information might you want to know about what is going on with your family, friends, or any part of the outside world?