



Opportunity Education Foundation

"Educating Children Around the World"

May 2015

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A FINAL WORD

A final word for the end of the school year...finish strong! Looking for the perfect end-of-year learning activity? While it's tempting to put in the movie and coast, try this fun letter activity that will help your future students as well as your pen pals. Task your students to write a letter as a graduate of your class to your next year's students. They can offer advice, list the top 10 lists of things to do, or not to do, or whatever they think will help the upcoming class.



The letter serves double duty when you mail a copy to your pen pals. Although some of your pen pals are not finishing their school year yet, they will still appreciate learning more about what your students learned. Practicing envelope addressing skills is often overlooked, so make sure they properly address their letter envelopes that will be ready to read next fall!

WHAT'S NEWS IN OEF SCHOOLS

In Tanzania News

Jamaal Mlewa, the Primary School Program Manager, was encouraged by the enthusiasm of the school group "cluster training" he managed in early May.

The cluster trainings invite teachers from several schools to meet and share best practices and solutions to issues facing them all. Topics included improving communication methods, planning meetings, coordinating exams to ensure consistent learning goals and discussing the pen pal program. These creative teachers even invented a special Opportunity Education Day, when there will be fun student activities in sports, games, quizzes, poems, songs etc. to mark the end of the program for each academic year. We applaud Jamaal and these awesome educators for their ingenuity and efforts to improve the education of those they serve.



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS ALAN BARKLEY?

Alan Barkley, the Director of International Operations, just landed home after 4 weeks of visiting OEF schools in Eastern Cape, South Africa and Zambia. Traveling to OEF schools often entails logging 15-hour-days.



In Zambia, the schools were very enthusiastic about the OEF program, reporting a reduction in absenteeism. One school reported that average attendance was between 50% and 60% but, after the program began, it increased to 98%.

Examination results have also improved. Many schools reported using the DVDs and materials for student review before taking their very important national exams.

Other comments received from Zambia schools were:

"The program helps children acquire skills more quickly." – Ngulula

"It is so much easier for children to grasp concepts." – Chimba

"The program has come as a dream." – Nsombo B teacher

"The materials have become essential to our teaching and learning." – Nsombo B teacher

"Our children are changing." – Nsombo B PTA member

"Using the materials has made teaching easy." – Mporokoso

"The program has changed the community's attitude towards learning." – Lupungu.

"Children are able to read much earlier." – Lupungu

Working with our excellent partner organization, World Vision Zambia, Alan drove almost 2,250 miles of Zambian countryside in one week, frequently on very poor roads, to visit 20 schools. In the remote areas, gas filling stations are few and far between as the roads are too bad for fueling tankers. Drivers frequently have to travel over 100 miles in each direction simply to fill their vehicles so a lot of fuel is used just getting to and from the filling station. We are glad he arrived home safely and are grateful for his work to provide such good news from the road!

WELCOME NEW SCHOOLS!

We always welcome new schools to our free, international pen pal program which is a fun and easy way to meet Language Arts, Social Studies and History/Civics standards. Share [this link](#) to invite others to join.

OEF would love to have more international schools. If you have educator friends, anywhere in the English-speaking world, forward their details to us and we will connect their school to one of our outstanding schools in Africa or Asia.



Email today and start writing tomorrow!

schools@opportunityeducation.org

THIS SCHOOL NEEDS PEN PALS!

Bugorola Primary School is a public school in Tanzania that serves 1,064 students with only 16 amazing teachers. Located on the remote Ukerewe Island, surrounded by Lake Victoria, it is a 4 hour boat ride to get to the school from the mainland. The school was thrilled recently to receive its new materials from OEF.

Bugorola's setting on Ukerewe Island is known for having a large population of Africans with albinism. It has been a haven for those who look so different and attracted many parents who have abandoned their children to a place where they thought they would be safe. Sadly, this is not always the case.

Superstitions about albinos persist, including the belief that certain body parts of albino people can transmit magical powers. Those in certain parts of Africa with albinism have been persecuted, killed and dismembered and their graves desecrated. Even today, they are presumed to be cursed and omens of bad luck.



While albinism is a genetically rare inherited condition, (only one in twenty thousand people is affected worldwide), it is quite common in sub-Saharan Africa. Superstition and poor education lead to persecution and isolation of albino people who often suffer from other genetic conditions that prove deadly at a young age.

OEF is proud to serve Bugorola Primary and the wonderful students and teachers who know that getting a good education will make a difference for their futures.

Joining our pen pal program is easy and writing letters is an excellent opportunity to learn more than textbooks or even the internet can offer. Just email us and we will put a Welcome Folder in the mail to you today!

Email: schools@opportunityeducation.org and you can start writing today!

If you already have a pen pal, refer a friend to our [OEF Pen Pal](#) link.

FEATURED SCHOOL & GIFT CERTIFICATE WINNER

Congrats to Katy Dupis of St. Elizabeth of Hungary School in Dallas, Texas.

On behalf of all of your pen pals at Thamae Lesotho Evangelical Church Primary School in Lesotho, thank you for sending letters!



Katy, send an email to: schools@opportunityeducation.org to claim your prize!

Want to win next month?

Just email schools@opportunityeducation.org after you mail your letters and you are entered to win!

START WRITING – RIGHT NOW!

We have the "write" letter lesson plans for maximizing the pen pal program for your students!

While no lesson plan is needed to write to your pen pals, if you want ideas – we have them!



Writing letters is a great activity to keep students productive during homeroom, study hall or downtime.

You can also integrate cross-curricular objectives into lesson plans that we have created to maximize learning through letters.

[Click Here for Letter Ideas and Resources](#)

[Click Here for Letter Lesson Plans](#)

We also have 4 options to stay up to date with our international pen pal program.

OPTION 1: To keep up with our "Friends" – we have a Facebook page just for you! Visit our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/OpportunityEducation>

OPTION 2: Unable to get on Facebook? No worries.

Visit our Pen Pal Blog. <http://opportunityeducation.wordpress.com/>

OPTION 3: Pinterest. <http://www.pinterest.com/opportunityed/>

OPTION 4: Twitter. <https://twitter.com/OpEdFoundation>

Check out our social media for interesting ideas, stories, and links to help generate enthusiasm and discussion about education plus lesson plans to integrate pen pal letters into your standard requirements.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Write Your Pen Pals!

Even if it's been a while, now is still the best time to write. The name, address and mailing instructions are available on our website. Start by [clicking here](#).

You can also email: Schools@OpportunityEducation.org

Get Others to Write!

We have 341 schools very eager to have English speaking pen pals. Share the following link – and make sure you CC schools@opportunityeducation.org – to get a gift certificate.

[Click Here to Refer A Friend and Get a Gift Certificate!](#)

Visit an Opportunity Education School!
Take a life-changing trip to teach, share and learn in an Opportunity Education school in Africa or India. [Click Here to Learn More.](#)





Picture of the Month:

A smile is happiness you'll find right under your nose.

- Tom Wilson

These beautiful smiles were captured at Al-Haramyn International School on the scenic island of Zanzibar, off the coast of Tanzania.

Perhaps they are happy because their school has consistently performed well academically, placing in the top 5 of Zanzibar secondary schools. We are proud to have such high achieving students in the OEF program

For more information please contact:

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STAY CONNECTED

