Communications 11/12 Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*When a book has made a strong impression on you, you might want to share your feelings with the person who sat down and wrote that book. Whether you agreed or disagreed with the book, whether you were touched by it or offended by it, you can follow a few steps to clearly make a point with your letter.*

Instructions on how to write a letter to an Author

* **Step 1**Begin by jotting down on scratch paper all the possible thoughts you might like to get across to this writer. Brainstorm by just randomly writing your ideas down; put down anything that comes into your head without censoring yourself. You might want to make comments about one or more of the following: --A character you could identify with or that you admired --A character you disliked --What you thought was an extremely believable—or unbelievable—part of the book --What you thought about the plot twists and turns—or lack of them --What you thought about the ending of the book --What you thought of the author’s writing

Other Ideas of what to write about

-Parts you liked/didn’t like (explain why too)

-Questions you would like to ask David about specific parts of the novel

-Qualities of David that you admired

-Questions you want to ask him about his family

-Parts of the novel you want to comment on for any reason

-Things you didn’t understand in the novel

-Questions you want to ask David about what happened after the novel

-Parts of your own life that relate to the novel

-Comment on parts of the novel that really affected you

* **Step 2**  Next, look through the list you’ve made and pick out what you think are the top two or three items. Circle those. Now write each of those items on separate sheets of scratch paper. Under each, jot down some specific thoughts. For example, if you are writing about a character you admired, what did you specifically admire about her or him—what did he or she do or not do that you were in awe of or admired.
* **Step 3**  Now decide if you want to concentrate your letter on what you’ve written on one, two, or all three of those sheets. Your letter will have a better chance of being read if it’s no longer than one written page, so remember that if you decide to write about three different topics, you’ll have to say less about each one. Once you’ve made that decision, you’re ready to actually write the letter.
* **Step 4**Begin with a sentence identifying which book you are writing about and something about yourself. For example, “I am a junior in high school, and I have just finished reading “The Best Day.” Or “As a computer programmer myself, I was very interested in reading your book, “The Best Day.”
* **Step 5**  Continue your letter by stating and explaining your main points. If you want to say the book was wonderful, go ahead and do so. And then tell why--by going to your scratch paper and using your ideas to talk about, for example, why you identified with the main character. Be very detailed in what you say, referring to specific events, dialogs, or description in the book.

**Step 6**  End your letter with a respectful general comment, whether complimentary or critical. You might say that look forward to reading the author’s future work (if you do indeed feel that way).

Reminders for writing letters: (remember to skip 2 lines between each)

1. Return address (Use your own if you want a response, use the schools if you don’t):

Princess Margaret Secondary

120 Green Avenue West

Penticton BC

V2A 3T1

2. Date

3. Inside address

Dave Pelzer

PO Box 131

The Sea Ranch, CA

95497

4. Salutation: Dear Mr. Pelzer,

5. Paragraph 1: State the purpose of the letter (who you are and why you are writing to him) (skip one line between each paragraph)

6. Paragraph 2: Details of the purpose (2-3 specific things you want to tell him/ask him about himself/the novel)

7. Paragraph 3: End with a general respectful comment (either praise or criticism) and your contact information (Skip 2 lines after this paragraph)

8. Complimentary Closing (skip 4 lines after this one)

9. Print name and sign name in space between complimentary closing and printed name.

Brainstorming area: (use another piece of paper if this isn’t enough)

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