

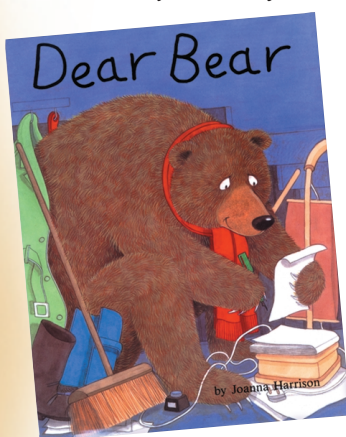
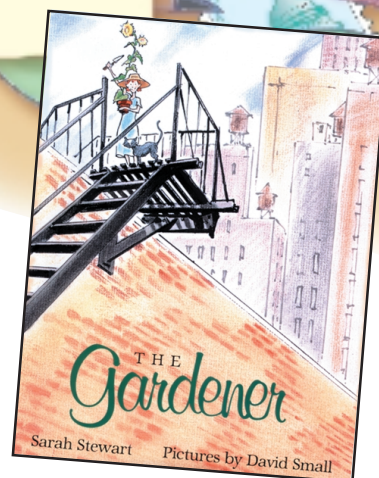
# Letters Are for Dear Me!

They help us share feelings and ideas that are difficult to discuss in person, and they make growing up a lot easier!

## The Gardener

By Sarah Stewart • Illustrated by David Small  
Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 1997 • Grades k and up • 32 pages  
ISBN 0-374-32517-0

When her parents lose their jobs, Lydia Grace is sent from her country home to live with her uncle in the city. Through letters, she chronicles her experiences. The Caldecott-winning illustrations show how Lydia's love of gardening brings joy to a once dreary corner of the city.



## Dear Bear

By Joanna Harrison  
Carolrhoda Books, Inc.; 1994 • Grades ps-3 • 32 pages  
ISBN 0-87614-839-9

Katie is afraid of the bear that lives in the closet under the stairs. When her mom suggests that Katie write the bear a letter and ask him to go away, an amusing correspondence begins that helps Katie conquer her fears.

## Dear Helper

What kinds of pen pals could students turn to for help? Explore this question by inviting students to brainstorm a list of typical kid problems, such as how to deal with bullies or how to get a pet to obey commands. Write each problem on the back of a legal-size envelope and tack these to a bulletin board. Next, have students brainstorm the names or occupations of people who could help with these problems, such as a school counselor or a dog trainer. Write each on a 3" x 5" index card. Place the cards in their corresponding envelopes. Review each envelope's contents and discuss how each person might prove helpful.

Each student selects one of the posted problems and writes a letter to the corresponding resource person. He then folds the letter in half and illustrates the outside. If desired, mail these to the corresponding resource people.

**PROBLEM SOLVING, WRITING TO A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE**



## Free Advice

Here's a great project to pull together classes of older and younger students. The teacher of the younger students reads aloud *Dear Bear* to her class. Her youngsters make a list of things that might scare them. Next, the teacher of the older students reads aloud the book and reviews the list. Her students write illustrated letters to the younger children suggesting how they might conquer their fears. Mount the letters and bind them into a book titled "Afraid No More: Letters of Advice From Friends." Imagine fears melting away as you present this charming keepsake to the younger class!

**CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING, WRITING TO A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE**