

Writing Exercise: Write a Letter You Can't Mail

by Kelly Jones, author of the Unusual Chickens series

In my Unusual Chickens series, Sophie writes letters to two relatives who have died: the abuela she misses very much, and the great-uncle who left her family the farm she lives on now. She can't mail her letters, and she knows her relatives can't write back. So, why do you think she writes to them?

1. Choose someone to write to that you know can't write back. Maybe it's a relative you miss, or one you never met, like Sophie. Maybe it's someone from the past, or someone from the future – someone who hasn't even been born yet. Maybe it's someone you know isn't real, like a character from a novel. How will you greet this person? Begin your letter.
2. What do you want to tell this person about yourself? If you've never met them, how will you describe yourself? If you haven't seen them for a while, what do you wish they could know about you now? Write a paragraph telling them about yourself.
3. What do you want to ask this person? What do you wish you'd asked them before, or what do you wish they could tell you now? Or, what do you wish you could say to them? Write a paragraph asking your questions, or telling them what you want to say.

The Unusual Chickens books are told in letters, lists, articles, and emails. If your letter was the beginning of a story, what might happen next?