

# THE LETTER OF INQUIRY (or REQUEST)

An inquiring mind is curious. Out of curiosity, a person writes a letter of inquiry to check things out—to seek information about a job, product, service, policy, or procedure. Writing a letter of inquiry or request involves detective work. You need to follow clues to get the facts. Ask yourself these questions:

- Exactly what do I want or need? Why? By when?
- Where can I get it? From whom?
- Am I being realistic or expecting too much?

If your letter is exact, you might get exactly the information you need. In fact, listing the specific questions you need answered or the items you want makes your reader's job even easier. Here's a sample:

Reservoir High School  
11550 Scaggsville Road  
Fulton, MD 20759  
Today's date

Name of person or a generic, non-gendered title (\*eg. Director, President, Executive Secretary)  
Bridge Company  
123 Engineering Road  
Suite 456  
San Diego, CA 78900

Dear (name of person or a generic, non-gendered title (\* above):

I am a \_\_\_\_ grade student enrolled in my county's gifted and talented program at Reservoir High School in Fulton, MD. In this program each student gets the opportunity to research a topic of his/her choice. I will be undertaking an academic-year-long, research-based study of \_\_\_\_\_. Specifically, I am researching (**your questions/topic here**). During the course I hope to educate myself further in this area, complete an annotated bibliography and research paper, and complete a project that will create some new knowledge, solve a real problem, and be presented to an interested, authentic audience.

I write to inquire whether you might be able to mail (or email) me (*be specific here in your request*) the following:

1. A description of one or more successful suspension bridge projects.
2. The design plan of one of those projects.
3. The names/e-mail addresses of any persons who would be willing to be interviewed on the subject of bridges.
4. Any other information that you deem pertinent to my research.

**(IR STUDENTS ONLY)** Additionally, I am seeking a professional advisor who might provide guidance for me throughout my research. Advisors are asked to:

- Offer/suggest readings and/or introduce students to other professionals in the field.
- Read assignments for content accuracy, including a research proposal, annotated source list, 8-10 page paper, abstract, and project.
- Provide guidance, via email or telephone, on a periodic basis.

If there might be someone in your organization who would consider assisting me in this capacity, I would be genuinely appreciative.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. Any information can be sent to the return address above, attention: Dr. Melissa Kiehl. However, if it is more efficient, information can be sent to [amandamcloveley@superfine.dream](mailto:amandamcloveley@superfine.dream). I hope to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)  
Amanda McLovely