

Lesson Plan

Note: This lesson plan can be used with any *Natural Inquirer* article.

Time needed:

Two class periods (90 minutes)

Materials (for each student or group of students):

- *Natural Inquirer* monograph or article
- Letter Template
- Write a Scientist Graphic Organizer
- Lined paper
- Writing utensil

In this lesson plan, students will read a *Natural Inquirer* article and write a letter to the scientist, asking for clarification on at least four questions.

Prep

Familiarize yourself with a *Natural Inquirer* monograph or article. Write an example letter to a scientist to share with the students.

Day One

Direct students to read the chosen *Natural Inquirer* article. Students may take turns reading paragraphs out loud. Depending on the amount of time available, have students skip the Reflection Section questions.

As students finish each section, have them write a summary of what they have read in the Write a Scientist Graphic Organizer. After they have read and summarized all sections, have them write down any outstanding questions for each section using the graphic organizer.

Day 2

Show students the letter template, and if available, your example letter. Have students compose a letter to the first scientist listed in the “Meet the Scientist” section.

Then hold a class discussion using the following questions as a guide:

- Why did you ask the scientist the questions you asked them? Why is it an important question to have answered?
- What are the advantages of writing a letter, rather than emailing or text messaging? What are the disadvantages?
- What did you learned from reading the article?

Collect their letters and use the rubric on page 81 for evaluation. If students would like to submit their letters, they may either send their hard copy letters to:

Natural Inquirer
USDA Forest Service
320 Green St.
Athens, GA 30602-2044

Or send letters electronically to jessica@naturalinquirer.org.

Note: While the *Natural Inquirer* staff will attempt to answer questions sent in to our office, we cannot guarantee that all questions will be answered. If letters are sent hard copy, please include an email address so that we may reply electronically.

Letter Template

Students' names

Teacher's name (e.g., Mrs. Jones' 7th grade science class)

School name

School address (City, State, ZIP)

Date

Scientist Full Name (with title)

Scientist Affiliation

City, State

(If you are able to access the Internet, the scientist's exact address may be searched)

Dear [Title] [Scientist's last name]:

First Paragraph: Students should explain that they read [Article name] in the *Natural Inquirer*. After reading the article, they developed four questions that they would like to ask. This paragraph should be 4 to 5 sentences long.

Middle Paragraph(s): Students should provide the context for their questions and ask them. The context includes: (a) which article section the question concerns and (b) what about the article information prompted the question. Students may decide to write four small paragraphs, one for each question.

Ending Paragraph: Students should thank the scientist and note that they look forward to a reply.

Closing (such as Respectfully yours, Sincerely, etc.)

Student names and signatures

Student Name(s): _____

Write A Scientist Graphic Organizer

Summary

Introduction	Methods
Findings	Discussion



Questions

Introduction	Methods
Findings	Discussion