

Our School Should Cancel Christmas



Riley Matthews
112 Mallstead Road
Newton
WA 6023

3rd November

Newton Primary School
12 Blythe Street
Newton
WA 6023

Dear Principal Chang,

As I am sure you are aware, Christmas is just around the corner and I am writing to request that you cancel the Christmas celebrations at our school. Not only do Christmas activities waste valuable learning time, but they are also a shocking waste of money and are harmful to the environment. Why should our education and environment be damaged simply for the sake of Christmas?

Firstly, Newton Primary School is an incredibly successful school. Each term, the dedicated teachers do their very best to teach us a huge range of skills, while the students try their best to learn. While Christmas craft, singing and games are fun, they are not useful, educational activities. If we stopped wasting valuable learning time with such meaningless activities, we could spread out the learning from the other terms and give ourselves more time to practise the important skills. Christmas activities are a waste of learning time. Surely, giving students more time to learn relevant skills is more important than Christmas?

Moreover, Christmas is a waste of money. Each year our school spends a shocking amount of money on supplies for Christmas craft, decorations and parties. The money spent on Christmas activities could be spent on more important things, such as better maths resources or superior sports equipment. Spending money on new school supplies or a local charity would be so much more meaningful and more reflective of the true Christmas spirit.



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Finally, it has been proven that Christmas is harmful for the environment. The amount of Christmas lights and electrical decorations we set up are a waste of energy and they increase our carbon footprint. Furthermore, the cheap, single-use decorations, such as tinsel and baubles, often break and go straight in the bin. We contribute enough to landfill as it is without the contribution of unnecessary broken ornaments.

Newton Primary School is a tremendous school, but we could significantly improve when it comes to the festive period. Cancelling Christmas would improve our education, save us money and could even help to save the planet!

I look forward to hearing your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Riley Matthews



Questions

1. Who wrote this letter?

2. What is the author's address?

3. To whom is this letter being written?

4. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter?

5. Which three reasons does Riley give for wanting to cancel Christmas at school?

6. Define: relevant

7. Do you think that Christmas should be cancelled in school? Explain your opinion.

8. What do you predict Principal Chang will do after reading this letter? Explain your answer as fully as you can.

Answers

1. Who wrote this letter?
Riley Matthews wrote this letter.
2. What is the author's address?
The author's address is 112 Mallstead Road, Newton, WA 6023.
3. To whom is this letter being written?
This letter is being written to Principal Chang.
4. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter?
Riley's purpose for writing this letter is to convince Principal Chang that their school should no longer celebrate Christmas.
5. Which three reasons does Riley give for wanting to cancel Christmas at school?
Riley's reasons are: Christmas is a waste of learning time; it is a waste of money; and Christmas is bad for the environment.
6. Define: relevant.
Children's answers may vary but should refer to relevant meaning to be of importance or to be appropriate to the current time.
7. Do you think that Christmas should be cancelled in school? Explain your opinion.
Children's answers may vary but should provide an explanation. For example: I agree that Christmas should be cancelled in school because I would rather spend time learning something that is important rather than wasting time.
8. What do you predict Principal Chang will do after reading this letter?
Children's answers may vary but should provide an explanation. For example: After reading this letter I predict that principal Chang will cancel the Christmas activities because he will want to spend the school's money on new resources.

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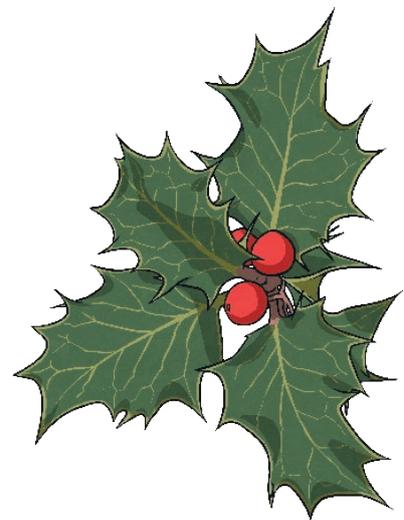
Dear Principal Chang,

Christmas is just around the corner and I am writing to ask that you stop our school from celebrating Christmas on campus. Not only do the Christmas activities waste valuable learning time, they are also a waste of money and are bad for our environment. Why should our school be damaged for the sake of Christmas?

Firstly, Newton Primary School is a very successful school. Each term, teachers try very hard to teach us a lot of skills and the students put in their best efforts. Christmas crafts, singing and games are not educational activities. If we stopped these silly activities, we could spread out the learning from the other terms and have more time to practise more important skills. Christmas activities are a waste of time. Surely, giving students more time to learn relevant skills is more important than Christmas?

In addition, Christmas is a waste of money. Each year, our school spends a lot of money on supplies for Christmas craft, decorations and parties. The money spent on Christmas activities could be spent on more important things, such as new maths resources or better PE equipment.

Finally, it has been proven that Christmas is terrible for the environment. The amount of Christmas lights and electrical decorations we set up are a



waste of energy. The cheap decorations, such as tinsel and baubles, often break and go straight in the bin. Surely, we shouldn't be adding to landfill? Shouldn't we be a more environmentally friendly school?

Newton Primary School is a wonderful school but I am sure that you can see how Christmas is harming our learning. Cancelling Christmas would improve our education, save us money and could even help to save the planet!

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Riley Matthews



Questions

1. What is Riley Matthews' address?

2. Who is the recipient of this letter?

3. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter?

4. Which three reasons does Riley give for wanting to cancel Christmas at school?

5. Define these words:

meaningless

dedicated

6. Find and copy a question from the letter.

7. Read the following sentences and decide if each is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Christmas is celebrated in December.		
Christmas decorations are a waste of money.		
Christmas activities waste learning time.		

8. Do you think that Christmas should be cancelled in school? Use the text to support your answer.

9. What action do you predict Principal Chang will take after reading this letter? Explain your answer as fully as you can.

Answers

1. What is Riley Matthew's address?
Riley Matthew's address is 112 Mallstead Road, Newton, WA 6023.
2. Who is the recipient of this letter?
The recipient of this letter is Principal Chang.
3. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter?
Riley's purpose for writing this letter is to convince Principal Chang that their school should no longer celebrate Christmas.
4. Which three reasons does Riley give for wanting to cancel Christmas at school?
Riley's reasons are: Christmas is a waste of learning time; it is a waste of money; and Christmas is bad for the environment.
5. Define these words:
Meaningless – to have no meaning or purpose.
Dedicated – to be very hardworking or devoted to a task.
6. Find and copy a question from the letter.
Why should our education and environment be damaged for the sake of Christmas? Surely, giving students more time to learn relevant skills is more important than Christmas?
7. Read the following sentences and decide if each is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Christmas is celebrated in December.	✓	
Christmas decorations are a waste of money.		✓
Christmas activities waste learning time.		✓

8. Do you think that Christmas should be cancelled in school? Use the text to support your answer.
Children's answers will vary but must refer to the text. For example: I agree that Christmas should be cancelled because the money spent on parties could be spent on the children's education or on charities.
9. What action do you predict Principal Chang will do after reading this letter? Explain your answer as fully as you can.
Answers will vary but must be fully explained. For example: I predict that Principal Chang will reply because Riley says he will wait for his response. I also predict that Principal Chang will choose to donate the money to charity as Riley explains that this is the true spirit of Christmas.

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Dear Principal Chang,

As you are undoubtedly aware, the festive period is upon us and so I am writing with a very specific request. I implore you to cancel the Christmas celebrations that annually take place at our school. Not only do these Christmas activities waste valuable learning time, they are a scandalous waste of money and are harmful to the environment. Why should our education and environment be damaged merely for the sake of Christmas?

Newton Primary School prides itself on its outstanding academic performance. Each term, the devoted teachers endeavour to teach us a vast range of skills, while the students tirelessly dedicate their days to learning. While Christmas craft, singing and games are enjoyable, they are not beneficial, educational activities. If we didn't waste time on mindless, meaningless activities (that most of us do at home anyway) we could spread out the learning from the other terms. This would significantly alleviate the pressure on both teachers and students and would gift us with more time to perfect other vital skills. Festive frivolities are a serious waste of leaning time. Surely, giving our studious scholars more time to learn relevant skills is more important than Christmas celebration?

Furthermore, Christmas is an outrageous waste of money. Annually, our school spend a small fortune on unnecessary supplies for Christmas craft, decorations and parties. The money thoughtlessly wasted on



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Christmas activities could be better spent on more important things, such as vital school resources and sports equipment. Spending money on new school supplies or donating to a local charity would surely be more reflective of the values of Newton Primary School.

Finally, it has been proven that Christmas is hazardous for the environment. The huge amount of Christmas lights and electrical decorations we set up in our school are a waste of energy that increase our carbon footprint. Our school usually prides itself of being one of the most environmentally friendly schools in the state, yet this is forgotten at Christmas time! Moreover, the cheap, single-use decorations, such as tinsel, foil signs and baubles, often break and go straight in the bin. Each Christmas we throw away at least two garbage bags full of Christmas decorations. Society contributes enough to landfill as it is without the contribution of unnecessary broken ornaments.

I strongly believe that lavish, wasteful Christmas celebrations are not necessary at our school. Newton Primary School is a tremendous institute, and is a role model for other schools in the area. Cancelling needless Christmas events would improve our education, save us money and could even help to save the planet!

I look forward to hearing your positive response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Riley Matthews



Questions

1. What is the author's connection to the school? How do you know?

2. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter? Explain your answer as fully as you can.

3. Explain the three reasons why Riley wants to cancel Christmas at school. Explain in as much detail as you can.

4. Define these words:

implore _____

frivolities _____

5. Read the following sentences and decide if each is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Christmas is celebrated annually.		
Newton school is a tremendous school.		
Christmas activities are a frivolous waste of learning time		

6. Look at the paragraph beginning 'As you are undoubtedly aware...' Find and copy an adjective that will influence Principal Chang's opinion.

7. Do you think that Christmas celebrations in school should be cancelled? Explain your answer as fully as you can.

8. What action do you predict Principal Chang will take after reading this letter?

9. List two techniques that Riley has used to persuade Principal Chang. Give an example from the text.

10. Why do you think that the writer ended the letter with: 'I look forward to hearing your positive response in due course'?

Answers

1. What is the author's connection to the school? How do you know?
Riley Matthews is a student of the school. He often uses the word 'our' when referring to the school and 'we' showing that he is one of the pupils wasting learning time.
2. What is Riley's purpose for writing this letter? Explain your answer as fully as you can.
Riley's purpose for writing this letter is to convince Principal Chang to no longer celebrate Christmas at school. He seems to be upset by the wasteful nature of the school's celebrations.
3. Explain the three reasons why Riley wants to cancel Christmas at school. Explain in as much detail as you can.
Children's level of detail will vary but must focus on: Christmas activities are a waste of learning time; Christmas celebrations are a waste of money; and Christmas decorations are harmful to the environment.
4. Define these words:
Implore - to earnestly ask for something.
Frivolities - activities that do not have serious value or purpose.
5. Read the following sentences and decide if it is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
Christmas is celebrated annually.	✓	
Newton school is a tremendous school.		✓
Christmas activities are a frivolous waste of learning time		✓

6. Look at the paragraph beginning 'As you are undoubtedly aware...' Find and copy an adjective that will influence Principal Chang's opinion.
Accept: valuable (learning), scandalous (waste of money), harmful (to the environment).
7. Do you think that Christmas celebrations in school should be cancelled? Explain your answer as fully as you can.
Children's answers will vary but must refer to the text. For example: I agree that Christmas should be cancelled because the money spent on parties could be spent on the children's education or on charities.

8. What action do you predict Principal Chang will take after reading this letter?
Answers will vary but must be fully explained. For example: I predict that Principal Chang will reply because Riley says he will wait for his response. I also predict that Principal Chang will choose to donate the money to charity as Riley explains that this is the true spirit of Christmas.
9. List two techniques that Riley has used to persuade Principal Chang.
Accept any persuasive writing technique with an example from the text. Children's answers may include: emotive language, rhetorical questions, powerful adjective choices, flattery.
10. Why do you think that the writer ended the letter with: 'I look forward to hearing your positive response in due course'?
Children's answers will vary but may refer to the fact that he is persuading Principal Chand to see things from his point of view or he is showing that he expects Principal to reply quickly.