

Writing a Letter to the Editor

Inquiry-based learning

A great way to give your opinion on events going on in the community, letters to the editor are an important part of a newspaper. This assignment asks you to write in role as a member of the Flamborough community during the outbreak of the First World War.

August 4th, 1914

British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith advised King George V to declare war on the German Empire. As a member of the British Empire and Commonwealth, the Dominion of Canada was automatically at war with the Germans. News spread quickly, and the streets of the Village of Waterdown would have been filled with residents that summer night.

Assignment:

1. Students are to go to the Waterdown District High School War Memorial and select a name of one of the veterans listed on the plaques for the First World War.
2. Construct a properly formatted letter (see back of this page) to the editor of the Flamborough Review¹ as the veteran you selected describing the scene in Waterdown the day news of the war reached the village.
 - a. Describe how people reacted to the news
 - b. Explain how your veteran feels about the possibility of going to war (are they excited? nervous? What are they expecting in Europe? Why do they want to go to war?)
 - c. In the final paragraph, explain what your veteran thinks is the main cause of the war (Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism or Nationalism). Make sure to explain why you think your selected cause is the main one.



Established by the History Department and Mr. John Deven in 2006, the WDHS War Memorial was dedicated by The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, on February 13th, 2008. Pictured are Douglas Thorne (Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Cadet) and Mr. Harv Murray (Second World War Veteran).

3. Submit your completed assignment to _____ on _____.

Checklist:

- Letter is properly typed and formatted (12-point font, Times New Roman or Arial font)
- Letter is at least 250 words in length
- Student has selected a veteran's name from the WDHS War Memorial
- Student has successfully written in role
- Student has selected, and successfully supported, their main cause for the First World War
- Writing style (including sentence structure and spelling) is acceptable

¹ The Flamborough Review was founded in May 1918 by Harold Green, but for the purposes of this assignment we have changed that date to May 1914.

Waterdown District High School
215 Parkside Drive
Waterdown, ON L0R 2H4
Canada

February 5th, 2014

Dear Editor of the Flamborough Review;

Body of the letter – needs to be at least 250 words, but not exceed one page. Make sure to properly format into paragraphs (Paragraph One: The events going on in Waterdown; Paragraph Two: Your feelings (in role as the veteran) going into the war; Paragraph Three: What you think is the main cause of the First World War)

The Complete Sentence Checklist:

- ✓ Starts with a Capital Letter
- ✓ Is a Complete Thought
- ✓ Ends With a Period

Sincerely,

Mr. Leo Clarke
905-689-6692