

Turn your summer read experience into Writing a Letter to the Author. Is this the project you want to choose? Use the following FAQ to determine if this approach to reflecting and responding to your summer read experience will give you the best opportunity to share and develop your skills.

What do we mean when we ask you to write a letter to the author? Following a standard personal letter format (see SAMPLE LETTER provided on the back of the description sheet for this project) share your ideas with the author of *The Good Thief*. Write to Ms. Tinti about how reading her book changed you. Be personal. Support your ideas with specific details, including examples and quotes.

Where can I get an idea of what the finished product should look like? See the SAMPLE LETTER on the back of the letter project description sheet. This is a letter's format. Your letter will be an MSWord document that is single spaced, at least five paragraphs, no less than one and no more than two pages.

How do I get started? Read the book and think about the main ideas and messages the book conveys to you. Organize your thoughts and then start to brainstorm. Loosen up, be creative. Watch how your ideas come together. Toss out what doesn't fit into your idea of your overall letter and start writing. **TIP:** This is a fictional story set in 19th Century New England. Start at the **Beginning** of the book, find at least 3 events/ideas that contribute to the **Rising Action** and then identify story elements that lead to the **Ending**. What is the book's **Resolution**? This story has a flow. What in *The Good Thief* interests and moves you?

How do I know what to write about in the letter? Stick to the book and the ideas it causes you to think about to come up with comments and questions. Remember, Ms. Tinti is a real person who grew up next door in Salem. You'll get to meet her when she visits our school in the fall & she will read your letter. Keep in mind that she tells imaginative stories that bring us closer to understanding the human condition. That's a hint that she is interested in life, people like you, and what you think so do a good job.

How do I make sure my Letter to the Author is something Ms. Tinti will understand and care about? First rule of most things is to keep it simple. The characters are living in another time, different technology, a less structured society and a fine line runs between facts and fiction. You're a teenager so put yourself in Ren's shoes so to speak. Imagine what he and the other characters might have been thinking and feeling. Pay attention while reading the book to names, ages, relationships, background, education, unique characteristics, clothing style, adventure scenes, themes and plot development.

What should the finished Letter to the Author look like? Compose your letter directly into your computer or write using pen and paper and then type it up. Use MSWord or a similar program and print two copies using standard 8 ½ " by 11" white paper. Make sure that you sign both letters. One goes into your book bag with the rest of the things you're bringing to school on your first day. The other copy of the letter goes into the mailbox, addressed to Ms. Tinti using her address in Brooklyn (see SAMPLE).

Insert the letter in an envelope. Stamp it, address it to Ms. Tinti using the New York address found on the sample letter, and send it on its way. Use a standard business size envelope, fold the letter into thirds. Bring the bottom of the sheet up so that it's two-thirds of the way up the page, and crease. Then fold down the top portion so that the crease matches up with the bottom of the paper. Folding the letter this way ensures that it will fit into most business size envelopes.

Ask a librarian Ms. Smith is available via email at dms@fenwick.org so don't hesitate to reach out. The O'Rourke Library and Information Center is on the 3rd floor on the athletic field side of the school.