



How To Run a Successful Letter Writing Campaign

By Heather Chirtea



Get your students involved in
classroom fundraising efforts for technology!



Introduction

Letter writing is part of every school's curriculum, so why not make it practical. Involve the students in a real world letter-writing campaign to raise funds for digital imaging projects in the classroom!

To help you get started, Tool Factory and Olympus have created a grants and fundraising website at www.digitalwish.com. *Digital Wish* offers a myriad of free resources to get you started:

- How-to instructions for mounting a letter writing campaign.
- Templates for letter writing and thank-you notes.
- Ready-made worksheets.
- Tips on grant writing
- Links to grants.
- A lesson plan library of digital imaging projects.
- Shopping for cameras and software.



This guide shows you 5 easy steps to success.





5 Steps to Success

Step 1 - Select your project

Let the student's brainstorm!

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=2>

Step 2 - Make a budget

Find the cost of everything you need.

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=3>

Step 3 - Identify your targets

Consider friends, family, local business and national corporations.

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=4>

Step 4 - Write, write, write letters!

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=5>

Step 5 - Thank you notes

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=6>





Step 1 - Select Your Project

You'll need projects at the center of your letter-writing campaign. Imagine receiving a letter that says,

“... please donate money so that we can buy digital cameras...”

That letter won't be nearly as effective as,

“...we're setting up a 'mock' crime scene in our class. Students will get to use digital cameras to photograph and analyze clues. Then we're going to write forensics reports, and create presentations for a mock courtroom proceeding, using digital software...”

A letter writing campaign will be more successful if your students have a story to tell. Every great project begins with an idea, so be creative and find out what interests your students. Visit *Digital Wish* and browse the Lesson Plan Library. Every project idea in the *Digital Wish* library was created by teachers who want to acquire cameras and software for their classroom.



<http://www.digitalwish.com>

Click “Lesson Plans”



TOOL FACTORY





Project Ideas - Digital Imaging

Administrative Ideas

- Yearbooks
- Award certificates
- Student ID cards
- Field trip photos
- School calendars
- School/Class handbooks
- Parent newsletters
- Seating charts
- Photos for open houses
- Photo inventory for insurance
- Flyers for school plays, or fundraisers
- Presentations
- Display cases and bulletin boards
- Class web pages
- Email attachments

Math

- Worksheets (counting, patterns, sequences, addition, subtraction, etc.)
- Story problems and solutions with pictures
- Geometric shape hunt
- Illustrate area, perimeter, diameter, etc.
- Demonstrate fractions, multiplication, division, etc.
- Money counting with photos of coins and bills
- Time-telling with photos of clocks
- Patterns and sequences
- Budget builders
- Create a catalog with pricing, sales items, etc.
- Illustrated charts and graphs

English/Language Arts

- Illustrated stories, essays, book reports, autobiographies, biographies, etc.
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Photo-inspired poems
- Flyers and advertisements
- Illustrated journals and diaries
- Visitor guides
- Shining Star books
- Captions for photos
- Greeting cards
- Pen pal letters
- Storybooks

Printing

- Banners
- School newspaper
- Making worksheets
- Posters for the school play or fundraisers
- Student projects
- Scrap books
- Photo albums



Social Studies/History

- Illustrated timelines
- Maps of your school and town
- Visitor guides
- Ballots
- Illustrated pen pal letters
- Virtual museums
- State reports (flag, flower, bird, industry)
- Time period collages
- Dioramas
- Family or class coat of arms
- Class flag
- Oral history project with photos and interviews
- Local history project
- Archive of historical photos and documents



Science

- Lab reports
- Observations
- Labeled diagrams (plants, electrical circuits, etc.)
- Posters for presentations and projects
- Document: wildlife, chemical reactions, dissections, geological features, animal/plant growth, pond/beach study
- Nutrition planner
- Building photo-rich databases for collecting science data





Lesson Plan Library

The largest library of lesson plans can be found right on the *Digital Wish* website. Adding a project to your class showcase is as easy as 1-2-3!

<http://www.digitalwish.com>

Click “Lesson Plans”

1) Browse by subject, or conduct a search by subject, grade level, key word or interest.

The screenshot shows the 'Lesson Plan Library' search page. On the left is a list of subjects: Art, English/Language Arts, Foreign Language, Health and PE, Journalism, Math, Music, Photography, Podcasting, Science, Social Skills, Social Studies, Special Needs, and Technology. On the right is a search form with fields for Keyword, Plan Name, Subject (a dropdown menu), Grade (a dropdown menu with options K, 1, 2), Product Type (a dropdown menu with options Badenes, Camera Bags, Cause and Effect Software), and Author. A 'Search' button is at the bottom right of the form.

2) When you find an interesting lesson plan, select “Add this plan to my account!”. The lesson plan will be moved into your personal profile. A “suggested materials list” will automatically appear.

The screenshot shows the details for a lesson plan titled '(G.I.F) Graphics Integrates Fun'. It includes a description: 'This lesson plan follows three of the South Carolina Visual Arts Curriculum Standards. These standards include: I. Creative Expression Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes; II. Aesthetic Perception/Creative Expression Using Knowledge of Structures and Functions; III. Creative Expression/Aesthetic Valuing Choosing and Evaluating a Range of Subject Matter, Symbols, and Ideas'. On the right, it lists 'Subject(s): Math, Art, Technology, Photography', 'Grades 7 through 8', 'Original Author: Darrell Wilson, Art Teacher', 'School: Mauldin Middle School, Simpsonville, SC 29681', and 'E-mail address: Dwilson@greenville.k12.sc.us'. A button 'Add this plan to my account!' is visible.

3) You can then edit the text of the lesson plan to meet your own curriculum objectives and ideas, then tailor your materials list to match your project.

This screenshot is similar to the previous one but includes additional options at the top: 'Back to Profile', 'Edit Plan', and 'Delete Plan'. The lesson plan details and subject information are the same as in the previous screenshot.





More Free Lesson Plan Libraries

Some classes select a single project idea. Others plan a stream of projects in order to integrate digital imaging across a wider range of grades and subjects. Either strategy works. Here are more free online libraries. Browse and find a winning idea!

Tool Factory's curriculum area has a whole section devoted to "Digital Camera Projects".

<http://www.toolfactory.com/cgi-bin/gencur.py>
Select "Digital Camera Projects"

To order call (800) 220-8386

TOOL FACTORY

Home | Products | Special Ed | Clip Art | Grants | Curriculum | Press | About Us | Support

Curriculum

- Language Arts
- Math
- Social Studies
- Science
- Visual Arts
- Technology
- Digital Camera Projects**

Welcome to the companion website designed to provide curricular support for users of Tool Factory products. Click around to find lesson plans and worksheets to supplement teaching units in a variety of subjects from grades K-12. Please check back frequently to find a growing list of resources for teachers, parents, and students.

Read the winning applications on the Classroom Grants Website for some great ideas!

<http://www.toolfactory.com/olympus>

OLYMPUS Your Vision, Our Future

TOOL FACTORY

Three contests. Thirty five winners. \$50,000 in awards. Apply now...

Classroom Grants

Ten grants awarded
Each grant worth \$3,700

[click here to enter](#)

Each Grant:
3 Olympus 5.0 megapixel digital cameras worth \$600
\$500 Cash
Tool Factory software worth \$2,000
30 "Digital Camera Basics" workbooks worth \$600

Olympus has the *Envision Your World* curriculum with great project ideas in social studies and science.

<http://www.envisionyourworld.com>

An Educational Resource Guide

enVISION your WORLD

Welcome

Please click on social studies, science or the newsletter link and you will be directed to that program.

- Social Studies Program
- Science Program
- Visionary Educator Newsletter





Step 2 - Make a Budget

With your project selected, it's time to figure out how much it will cost. Remember, the budget will become the basis for your fundraising campaign. Donors will be given the opportunity to sponsor items from your *Digital Wish* list. Here is a typical materials list:

Digital Imaging Materials List

Mobile Digital Camera Lab -

<http://www.toolfactory.com/products/page?id=2200>

Digital Cameras - <http://www.toolfactory.com/cameras>

Camera Accessories

- Storage cards

- Rechargeable batteries

- Camera cases

- Extended warranties - if students are handling cameras

- Image transfer drives - flash drives

Project Building Software

- Photo manipulation or art software

- Web page building

- Slide shows

- Page layout software

Digital Voice Recorders

Printing

- Printer or photo processing

- Ink and photo paper

- Book binding or calendar creation





Building a Simple Budget

The easiest way to make a budget is to simply...go shopping! A budget is nothing more than a list of things you want to purchase, along with the price for each. Here is a simple budget:

Item	Quantity	Price Per	Total Cost
Digital Camera -Olympus SP-510	2	\$329.99	\$659.98
Fresco- Art Software	1	\$379.95	\$379.95
Black Toner	1	\$132.99	\$132.99
Cyan Toner	1	\$129.99	\$129.99
Majenta Toner	1	\$129.99	\$129.99
Yellow Toner	1	\$129.99	\$129.99
Color Lazer Photo Paper, High Gloss, 2-sided, 100 Sheets	28	\$18.49	\$517.72
6mm Spiral Bindings, 100/box	2	\$15.25	\$30.50
Case 9"X12" Envelopes	1	\$16.00	\$16.00
GRAND TOTAL			\$2,127.11

By showing the individual cost of each item, sponsors can make small contributions or large ones.

The total shows the cost of the entire project.

Download budget templates from *Digital Wish* in Excel format. Then just fill in the blanks!

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=3>





Building a Categorized Budget

For larger projects, you may want to create a categorized budget. This will help isolate costs for major items. This can be useful when doing fundraising with larger corporations who are more likely to make larger contributions to your project.

Item	Quantity	Price Per Unit	Total Per Item	Total Category
Digital Cameras				
Mobile Digital Camera Lab - 11 Cameras	1	\$3,452	\$3,452	
Digital Camera – EVOLT E-500 Two Lens Kit	1	\$799	\$799	
Total Cameras			\$4,251	\$4,251
Camera Accessories				
Digital Camera Guide for Educators	4	\$20	\$80	
Flash Drives for photo transfer	4	\$20	\$80	
Charger and 4AA batteries	8	\$35	\$280	
1 Gigabyte xD Picture Cards	12	\$50	\$600	
Total Accessories			\$1,040	\$1,040
Software for Project Building				
Software for project building - Tool Factory Workshop, school site license	1	\$1,999	\$1,999	
Slide show software - MultiMedia Lab V	1	\$99	\$99	
Art software- Fresco, school site license	1	\$379	\$379	
Total Software			\$2,477	\$2,477
Printing Output				
Ream of photo paper	20	\$25	\$500	
Color printer cartridges	8	\$39	\$312	
Total Printing			\$812	\$812
GRAND TOTAL				\$8,580

Corporations or parents might make larger donations.

Download easy budget templates at
<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=3>





Step 3 - Identify Your Targets

Friends and Family Member

Have your students make a list of everyone they know. Don't forget people in far-away towns!



Local Businesses

Get the yellow pages and identify businesses in your local area.

Real estate agencies and banks - A strong school system will increase local property values. Real estate agents can be your most supportive donors.

Local retail stores - Don't overlook the value of "In Kind" donations. If a local store carries anything on your list, write them directly for a donation of goods.

Personal connections - Students should make note whether they have a personal connection in each business.

Don't duplicate effort - Let the students write to the businesses where they have the strongest ties. No overlap!

National Corporations

Target a small number of *presidents* or *CEOs* of national corporations. Do some research at the library and involve your tech coordinator or librarian! Plan to send a myriad of letters to each targeted executive.

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=4>





Letter Writing Campaign Targets

Make a list of relatives, local businesses, and national corporations. Be sure to note whether there's a personal connection with each contact.

Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____
 Company: _____
 Position: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
☐ Business ☐ Friend ☐ Relative ☐ Local
 Note: _____

Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____
 Company: _____
 Position: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
☐ Business ☐ Friend ☐ Relative ☐ Local
 Note: _____

Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____
 Company: _____
 Position: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
☐ Business ☐ Friend ☐ Relative ☐ Local
 Note: _____

Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____
 Company: _____
 Position: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
☐ Business ☐ Friend ☐ Relative ☐ Local
 Note: _____

Download editable templates at www.digitalwish.com





Step 4 - Write Letters

Writing is part of every school's curriculum. The planning and execution of a letter-writing campaign makes an excellent real-life application of your English curriculum.

It can be a great deal of fun, and there is a tremendous benefit in community outreach. Community members who might not otherwise have a connection to your classroom, will suddenly take an interest in your success. Here are some tips and tricks.

Tips for Success

- Plan your letters with pre-writing worksheets.
- Tell your story - don't just ask for donations.
- Include instructions on how they can donate. They need to know who to make the check out to!
- Be sure your budget includes items in all price ranges. You'll want them to be able to contribute at any level.
- Don't forget to decorate the envelopes, draw pictures, or include photos.



Look for downloadable templates here:

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=5>



Letter Planning

Download, edit, and print. Free letter-planning worksheets are posted on the *Digital Wish* website for all grade levels.

<http://www.digitalwish.com>

Click "Mount a Letter-Writing Campaign" and download worksheets

Pre-Writing for Fundraising Letters

Name: _____

Date: _____

Who is the recipient? _____

What do they do/where do they work? _____

Why are you writing? Describe your project _____

What is Digital Wish? _____

What are _____

How will _____

What will _____

Why is this _____

How can _____

How do the _____

(Insert date here.)

To Donor Name
Donor's Address Line 2
Donor's Address Line 3
Donor's Address Line 4

Dear [Donor Name]:

1st Paragraph: Explain who you are. Why are you writing?

Dear _____

My pre-kindergarten class is raising funding to buy digital cameras and software for our classroom. Will you help us? Through a letter writing campaign we are looking to collect donations from parents and community members to make this purchase. Below my students have drawn pictures to represent their intended use with the new technology we seek.



We would like _____ So we can _____



Thank you from: _____

Please send donations to Insert School Contact information here or search for our school to make a donation online at www.digitalwish.com.

For more information on Digital Wish visit: www.digitalwish.com

2nd Paragraph: Explain who you are. Why are you writing?

3rd Paragraph: Explain who you are. Why are you writing?

4th Paragraph: Explain who you are. Why are you writing?

Thank you for _____

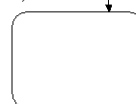
Students Name
Grade level
School Name
School Address

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Using the worksheet map your pre-writing ideas.

My class needs:



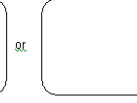
To do this:



You can help by:



Please make donations by:



Post about our school's Digital Wish at: www.digitalwish.com



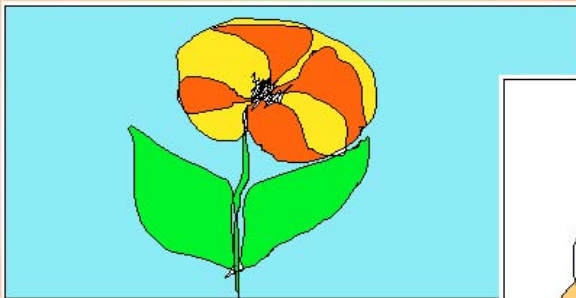


Elementary Example

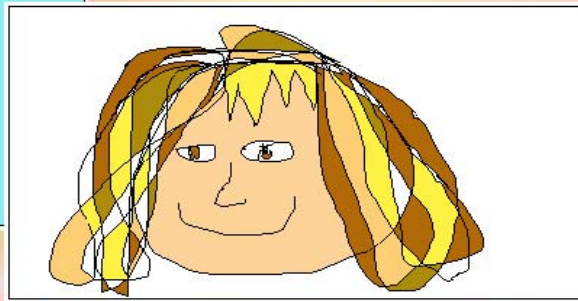
Younger students can draw pictures if they can't yet write!

Dear Mr. Johnson at Manchester Pizza,

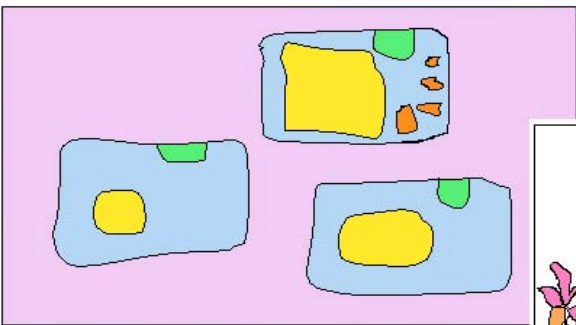
The Kindergarten Class is fundraising so that we can study flowers, bugs, and frogs. We'd like to take photos of plants and animals around the school. We'll need to buy digital cameras and software for our classroom. Will you help us? Below my students have drawn pictures to represent their intended use for the new technology we seek.



We want to take photos of flowers.



This is me.



We need cameras and software.



We will study nature.

Thanks for your support!

Sue





Middle/High School Example

January 17, 2007

Officer Jennifer Jones
Georgetown Police Department
432 Main Street
Georgetown, VT 05256

Dear Officer Jones:

Our class would like to learn what it's like to be a detective and we need your help! We are going to set up a mock-crime scene, then use digital cameras to record the evidence and examine clues.

This project will culminate with a report on the crime scene, then we'll hold a mock-trial to present the evidence and argue the case.

We need to purchase 3 Digital Cameras for our classroom, a visual database to log the photos, and a presentation software program to create our final display of the evidence.

Unfortunately the school cannot incorporate this purchase into this year's budget, so my class has decided to run a fundraising campaign to reach our financial goal. I hope you and the police force can help us with a donation! You can mail a check to Georgetown Middle School. Also please visit our class website at www.digitalwish.com. Here you can read about our class project, see the products we need, and make a cash donation to our online account.

Thank you for your time and generous support of our local school community!
Sincerely,

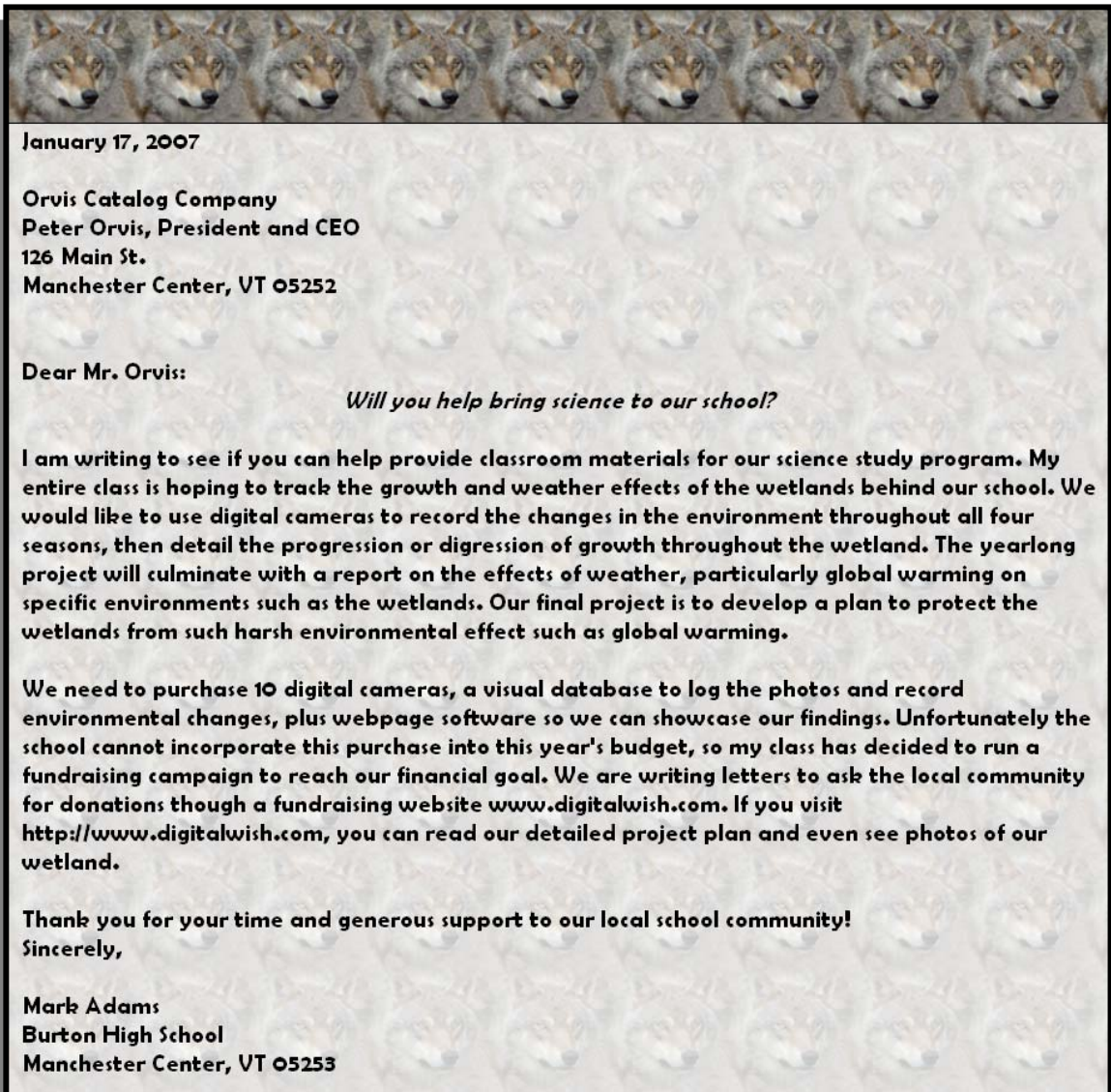
Jim Mackenzie
Georgetown Middle School, 6th Grade
Georgetown, VT 05256





Corporate Example

Select corporations who will be sympathetic to your mission, and always write to the *president*. Plan to send 10-50 letters to *each* targeted executive. They may not answer your students directly, but you will receive a response, and probably a larger donation.





What to Put in the Envelope

Make it easy for your recipients to donate. Every envelope should include the following:

Dear Mr. Fredricks,
Our science class is planning to do a pond study. We need to raise money to purchase digital cameras so that we can do super close-up shots of bugs, lizards, and plants.



Can you help us make our Digital Wish come true? Please visit www.digitalwish.com and take a look at our class project. You can make a donation online, or send a check to Sunderland Elementary School.

Thanks for any donations you can give.
Sincerely,
Justin Bintersmith
Justin Bintersmith



Our science program will use the project.



- 1) Personal letter.
- 2) Sponsorship form.
- 3) Self-addressed return envelope (add postage if possible).



Support the Kids and Make a Donation!

We are fundraising to purchase digital imaging equipment for our school. Please sponsor any of the items below.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____ Company: _____
Address: _____

Quan	Item	Cost	Total
	Sponsor the entire digital imaging program	\$10,533	
	Mobile Digital Camera Lab	\$3,452	
	Digital Camera – SLR for yearbook	\$799	
	Digital Camera – Olympus 720 SW, underwater	\$379 each	
	Digital Camera – Olympus FE-180 (4 needed)	\$179 each	
	Tool Factory Workshop, school site license	\$1,999	
	Software for slide shows - MultiMedia Lab V	\$99	
	Software for photo manipulation - Fresco	\$379	
	Digital Camera Guide for Educators	\$20 each	
	Flash Drives for photo transfer	\$20 each	
	Charger and 4AA batteries (8 needed)	\$35 each	
	Gigabyte xD Picture Cards (12 needed)	\$50 each	
	ream of photo paper (20 needed)	\$25 each	
	Color Printer Cartridges (8 needed)	\$39 each	
	Cash Donation – Any amount		
	Kind Donations – Please donate old digital cameras, photo paper, or any items from the list.		
	Total Donation		

Please make checks payable to "Sunderland Elementary".
Sunderland Elementary School, 98 Bear Ridge Rd. Sunderland, VT 05250

Thanks for your donation!





Step 5 - Thank You Notes

You've done all the research, written the letters, and now it's time to send a big "Thank You" to everyone who donated to your project! The hardest part of Step 5 is keeping track of who donated, and how much they contributed. Digital Make your own system and stick with it! Here are some tips.

Thank You Note Tips

- *Digital Wish* will automatically track who donates online, and send you an email notification every time there's a purchase made.
- A quick thank you note utility is available at www.digitalwish.com.
- Let the kids write the "Thank You" notes. The donors will always appreciate personal notes from the students.
- Be sure to mention how well your project is progressing. Take pictures and include them in your correspondence!

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=6>





Step 5 - Thank You Notes

Download easy-to-edit templates for writing perfect thank you notes.

Teacher Name _____ (Insert Date)

Insert School Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone: XXX-XXX-XXX ext. XX _____

Dear _____,

My name is _____. I would like to thank you for donating _____ to our *Digital Wish*. We look forward to completing our financial goal from generous supporters such as yourself so we can _____.

This project is particularly important to me because _____.

You can track our progress by visiting www.digitalwish.com! Thank you for supporting your local community school system and the education of the future!

Pre-Writing for Fundraising Thank You Letters

Name: _____

Date: _____

Why are you writing? What did he/she contribute? _____

Why is their contribution so important to you and the school? _____

Why is this wish so important to you personally? _____

Teacher Name _____ (Insert Date)


Insert School Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone: XXX-XXX-XXX ext. XX _____

Dear _____,

Thank you so much for your kind contribution of _____. Your donation to our *Digital Wish* has helped us come closer to reaching our financial goal. Below you will see my class and the smiling faces that you have helped!



Thanks so much for your generous contribution!

Teachers Name _____

Teachers Position/Title _____

Please about our school's Digital Wish at www.digitalwish.com

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date: _____

Heading _____

Salutation _____

Thank you for: _____

This is important because _____

to me _____ to my class _____ to the school _____

What is our *Digital Wish*? _____

How will they know when we have reached our goal? _____

Their contribution is important to the community because _____

Closing _____

Please about our school's Digital Wish at www.digitalwish.com

Download, edit, and print templates.

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/fundraising?id=6>

