

## 15 My ideal penfriend

<b>Aim</b>	To write a simple letter about oneself and then to reply to a letter.
<b>Preparation</b>	Copy the handout on page 53 – one copy per student.
<b>(Optional)</b>	Bring in a letter you have received from another country.

### **Introduction** (5 minutes)

Tell the class that you have just received an interesting letter from a foreign friend/penfriend (show a letter if you have one). Talk about the pleasure of receiving mail and explain about penfriends. Ask if anyone in the class has one and, if so, discuss briefly.

### **Presentation** (15 minutes)

Explain that everyone is going to choose an ideal penfriend – someone they would be interested to write to and get a letter from. Stress that this can be anyone they choose. Ask for suggestions and make a list on the board. This could include famous sports people, film stars, historical figures, characters in books, beings from other planets, people from the future, animals, etc. Give out the handout and draw attention to the layout of a letter, i.e. the position of the address, the date, the greeting (*Dear ...*), the paragraphs, the close. Read the first list. Divide the class into small groups and ask them to add details of what else they would say about themselves. Listen to suggestions and write some up on the board. Then look at the second list and ask them to go back in their groups to think of what else it would be interesting to know about a new penfriend. Discuss briefly.

### **Practice** (30 minutes)

The students now work individually for about 10 minutes to write a short letter to their chosen penfriend. Circulate to give help and encouragement. Weaker students should be encouraged to write something simple and clear while the stronger students can be more adventurous. Make sure everyone addresses their letter clearly and also signs their name. Take in all the letters and then redistribute them. Students now have a new letter and their task is to write a short reply. Spend a few minutes discussing what might go into this letter, for example: thanks for the original letter, responding to some of the information given, answering the questions, asking some more questions, close, etc. Give up to 10 minutes for the replies to be written. Then give the replies back to the original senders to read.

### **Conclusion** (5 minutes)

Put students into small groups and ask them to read the letters and replies and choose one pair to read to the whole class. Listen and comment. **Optional Extension** Talk about what makes a good letter.

### **Homework**

Students could rewrite their letters using ideas from the classwork, aiming to make them as interesting as possible. This could even lead on to the class having real penfriends in an English-speaking country.

