

The Letter Archive

Sample anonymous letters between donor families and recipients
(For teacher use only – not to be distributed directly to students)

These letters model the tone, structure, and emotional sensitivity appropriate for Year 9 students learning about empathy, grief, gratitude, and ethical communication.

They are fictional but written to reflect the real constraints of Australian donor–recipient correspondence.

LETTER 1 – From a Recipient to a Donor Family (Anonymous – sent through the official correspondence system)

Dear Donor Family,

There are no perfect words for a moment like this, but I want to begin with the most important ones: thank you.

I think every day about the person you lost, and I carry a deep respect for their life and for the decision that led to this gift. I want you to know that I think about your family often, especially on the days when I am able to do something I couldn't before. Those are the moments when I feel both joy and a quiet sadness, knowing that my gain came from your loss.

Since receiving this gift, I've been able to return to routines that once felt impossible. I spend more time with the people I love, and I'm able to take part in things that make me feel like myself again. I want you to know that I honour this gift by living my life with gratitude.

Thank you for your courage, your generosity, and your kindness.

Your loved one continues to make a difference in ways you may never fully see – but I see it every day.

With respect and gratitude,

A Recipient



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 **LETTER 2 – From a Donor Family to a Recipient**
(Anonymous – sent through the official correspondence system)

Dear Recipient,

Thank you for your letter. It meant more to us than we can express.

Knowing that our loved one was able to help someone has brought a small light into a very difficult time.

We still miss them deeply, and there are days when the grief feels heavy. But hearing that their gift has given someone else strength, hope, and time has brought us comfort. It helps to know that something good continued even after our world changed.

We wish you continued health and the chance to enjoy the moments that matter most to you. Please know that we think of you and hope that your life continues to grow around this gift.

With kindness,

A Donor Family



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LETTER 3 – A Recipient’s Update Letter (Sent Months Later) *(Anonymous – sent through the official correspondence system)*

Dear Donor Family,

I hope this message reaches you gently. I wanted to write again to let you know how much your family’s decision continues to mean to me.

Since my last letter, life has slowly opened up in new ways. I’ve been able to return to school more regularly, spend time with friends, and make plans that once felt uncertain. Your loved one is part of every milestone, every breath of progress.

I still think of your family often, and I carry a quiet gratitude with me. I honour this gift by trying to live in a way that reflects kindness, resilience, and appreciation.

Thank you again for allowing me the chance to grow forward.

Warm regards,

A Recipient



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LETTER 4 – A Donor Family’s Reflection

(Anonymous – sent through the official correspondence system)

Dear Recipient,

We received your update, and it brought warmth into a heavy season.

Thank you for taking the time to tell us how you’re doing.

Knowing that our loved one helped someone is an important part of our healing. Even though our grief hasn’t disappeared, we find comfort in imagining that their generosity has made your life brighter.

We don’t need details – it is enough to know that you are living fully.

Your gratitude truly matters to us.

Wishing you strength and joy,

A Donor Family



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NOTES FOR TEACHERS (Do Not Share with Students)

To model ethical and safe correspondence, all letters must:

- Avoid names
- Avoid dates
- Avoid ages
- Avoid hospitals, towns, or identifiable events
- Show dual emotions (grief + gratitude)
- Honour the donor respectfully
- Emphasise the gift without implying debt
- Reflect real-world transplant communication rules

These samples can be read aloud, used as inspiration for modelling tone, or shown privately to staff preparing for class discussion.

