

# Guest Speaker

## Thank You Note Lesson Plan

### Middle School Edition



## Writing Effective Thank-You Notes to Guest Speakers

DONE	Pre-Work	NOTES
SESSION TITLE: <i>Thank-You Note Writing</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Session Length:</b> 30–35 minutes (dependent on type of foldable used)</p> <p><b>Number of Participants:</b> Varies</p> <p><b>Participant Demography:</b> Middle School</p> <p><b>Supplies and Visuals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ One sheet of 8.5 x 11 paper for each student</li><li>■ Example foldable for reference</li><li>■ Writing utensil for each student</li><li>■ Copies of example thank you note handout</li><li>■ Blank thank you note or notecard for each student</li><li>■ Markers</li></ul> <p><b>Content Source(s):</b></p>	

DONE	Outlook	NOTES
<input data-bbox="110 239 155 298" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Participants will know or be able to:</p> <p><b>Objective 1:</b> Apply the Four Ws method to write a thoughtful thank-you note.</p> <p><b>Content Summary for Facilitator</b> Students will learn about the Four Ws of writing a thank you note to a guest speaker, business partner or job site. The Four Ws are <b>Who, Where, What</b> and <b>Why</b>. They will identify each section using an example thank you note, and then each student will write their own thank you note to a guest speaker, business partner or job site.</p> <p><i>Italicized text is intended to be a sample script of words to be spoken by the teacher or facilitator.</i></p> <p>Regular font text is instructional to the teacher or facilitator.</p>	

DONE	Engagement – Link	NOTES
<input data-bbox="110 772 155 831" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Approximately 2 minutes</b></p> <p><i>“Turn to the person next to you, look them straight in the eye, and maintain solid eye contact.</i></p> <p><i>Repeat after me: ‘Thank you’ pause and let them repeat ‘for being the best’ pause and let them repeat ‘at underwater basket weaving’ pause and let them repeat ‘and for not making this weird’ pause and let them repeat ‘at all.’</i></p> <p><i>Okay, you can break eye contact. Was that a ‘good’ thank you?”</i></p> <p>Solicit responses.</p> <p><i>“Why or why not?”</i></p> <p>Students may respond with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ it was awkward</li> <li>■ it wasn’t true</li> <li>■ I didn’t know what we were doing</li> <li>■ Etc...</li> </ul> <p>Affirm each answer and dig deeper as needed.</p>	

DONE	Engagement – Preview	NOTES
<input data-bbox="110 1520 155 1579" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Approximately 1 minute</b></p> <p><i>“This was not really a good thank you.</i></p> <p><i>In fact, you probably felt more awkward and weird about it than when we first started class! We all have opportunities to thank people each day — sometimes for small things and sometimes for big things. It is so essential that we thank individuals in a “good” way who have devoted their time, talents and resources to us.</i></p> <p><i>Today we will discover the art of writing a stellar thank-you note. To do this, we will discuss the Four Ws and what each of those mean. We’ll focus our thinking about thank yous on people who help us in our classroom or SkillsUSA chapter — especially industry partners. Let’s get to it!”</i></p>	



**Approximately 15 minutes**

**Objective 1:**

Apply the Four Ws method to write a thoughtful thank you note.

Choose one of the two foldable options for your students to put together. See the supporting pages for the two different options. Option 1 is easier and will take a little less time. Option 2 is fun, but may take more time for your students to cut and fold.

Create an example foldable before this lesson, so students can have a reference point if they get stuck. This also helps you explain how to create the foldable. Also consider using colorful copy paper and allowing students to choose their favorite color to use for this activity.

Make sure ALL students have the foldable created before moving on.



*“There are four steps to writing a stellar thank-you note. We can remember these steps using the four Ws.*

*Jot down ‘Who’ on the first tab of your foldable. This is our first W.”*

Allow students to write down Who on the first tab. Then instruct them to flip up that tab.

*“It’s important we specify who we are writing the thank you note to. On the inside of the tab, write down ‘Who am I writing the thank-you note to?’ Underneath that write Dear \_\_\_\_\_, This will be the first line of all our thank-you notes.*

*On your second tab, write down ‘Where.’ In order to paint a clear picture, we need to mention where the presentation, field trip or other event took place. On the inside of the tab, write down ‘Where did this occur?’ On the other side of your tab write down your school, a SkillsUSA conference, or a field trip.*

*After our ‘Where’ section is done, we move onto our third ‘W.’ On your third tab jot down ‘What.’ In our thank-you notes we need to recognize **what** our guest speaker or job site did for us. On the inside of the tab, jot down ‘What did they give me?’ This might be information, an experience or physical items. The key to this section is being specific. Include at least three things you learned or got from the guest speaker or job site.*

*Finally, our last W is ‘Why.’ Take a moment to write down ‘why’ on your last tab. Flip open the tab and write down ‘Why was their presentation impactful to me?’ On the other side of the tab, jot down ‘What will I do with the information I learned from this presentation or job site?’*

*After we have all four of our Ws included in the thank-you note, all that’s left is to close it out! Flip your foldable over and write down:*

*‘Thanks again,*  
\_\_\_\_\_’

*We can also use Sincerely, Gratefully, Regards, or other appropriate closing statements.”*

DONE	Wisdom — Main Point 1	NOTES
<input data-bbox="126 273 175 325" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Approximately 3 minutes</b></p> <p>Instruct students to find a partner.</p> <p><i>“In a moment, you and your partner will receive an example thank you note. Work together to split the thank-you note into each of the four Ws. Use a marker to draw a border around each of the four sections and make sure to label it with the correct W. What questions are there?”</i></p> <p>Pass out the example thank you note and allow students to split it into the four Ws. Walk around and check for understanding as students work. If time allows, you can ask for examples of the correct answers for labeling the four Ws.</p>	

DONE	Wisdom — Action 1	NOTES
<input data-bbox="126 682 175 735" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Approximately 10 minutes</b></p> <p><i>“Think back to our most recent guest speaker. What did they talk about?”</i></p> <p>Solicit a few responses. If you have not had a recent guest speaker/field trip/industry partner visit, do your best to identify a great parallel example. This could be an alumni member who recently made a donation, parent volunteers who helped with an activity or event, or school administrators or teachers who assisted your classroom or chapter.</p> <p>We will put the four Ws to work by writing a personalized thank you note to that guest speaker/person. Use your foldable and the example thank you note to help you with this. Also take a look back at your notes guide from the presentation to help you decide what to write. Make sure to include each of the four Ws and a closing line! You have ten minutes. What questions are there?</p> <p>Hand out the thank you notes or notecards and allow students to write their thank you notes. If you have not had a guest speaker or other person interact with your classroom or chapter recently, consider having students write their note to a teacher in the building, parent, or guardian to practice the Four Ws method for a more personal thank you. Walk around the room and provide support as needed.</p>	

DONE	Final Review	NOTES
<input data-bbox="126 1312 175 1365" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Approximately 1 minute</b></p> <p>Collect the thank-you notes, and share with the students that these will actually be sent to the guest speaker (or whoever they wrote the note to).</p> <p><i>“Thank-you notes are an important way to express gratitude to someone for taking time out of their schedule to share something with us — whether that’s information, an experience, or physical items. The four Ws: Who, Where, What, and Why can help us craft a stellar thank you note to share our appreciation! And as you saw, it doesn’t take much time commitment from us. We can be most intentional with our thank you notes when we are paying attention to the things that impact us with our interactions with others, so next time you’re receiving something helpful from someone else, challenge yourself to consider ... who? where? what? why?”</i></p>	

DONE	Reflection	NOTES
<input data-bbox="110 279 159 331" type="checkbox"/>	<p>After having taught this lesson plan, consider the following questions to reflect on your teaching and the students' learning experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What went well during the lesson? How do you know?</li> <li>■ What didn't go as planned during the lesson? What tells you this?</li> <li>■ What might you do differently if teaching this lesson again in the future?</li> <li>■ How can you remind students of this content beyond this lesson?</li> </ul>	

## MS 2 GUIDE: **Handout**

### THANK-YOU NOTE EXAMPLE

Dear Lowe's,

Thank you for sponsoring the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference! I was able to attend the SkillsUSA NLSC as a competitor in the Cabinetmaking competition. In my event, I was able to demonstrate my skills of reading and drawing plans, developing cut lists, and assembling all parts of a cabinet. At NLSC, I also listened to various inspirational speakers and attended leadership workshops. One of my favorite parts of NLSC was networking with all the other students and business and industry partners that were there! Attending and competing at NLSC made me realize how important it is to be learning real-world skills that are needed in the workforce. I now know I want to pursue a career in woodworking because of my time as a competitor.

Thanks again,

*Susie SkillsUSA*