

# HOW TO ASK A TEACHER FOR A REFERENCE LETTER



When you apply for a job, scholarship, summer research program, or to a handful of post-secondary programs, you will need reference letters from teachers/employers or others who know you. To obtain good reference letters, you need to choose the right people and provide them with all the information they need to write you a great letter. If you follow these guidelines it will be easier for the person you have asked, you will get better letters, and you will be more successful reaching your goals.

1. **Choosing the right teacher** – Obviously, a person who gave you a good grade in a class and was impressed by your academic performance would be a good choice. But to write the kind of letter that impresses the reader, the teacher should also be able to comment on your creativity, personality, and other accomplishments. A teacher will get to know you better if you participate in school related activities. Try to get involved in such activities with one or two faculty members during your time at Lindsay Thurber. Not only will the experience itself be a valuable part of your education, but you will also establish a relationship with a mentor who will be able to write a much richer letter about you.
2. **What to give the teacher when asking for a reference letter** - A teacher needs as much information as possible to write a letter. Give the teacher all the items on this list:
  - a) Description of the position/scholarship/program to which you are applying
  - b) Photocopy of your application, especially the essay you write describing why you want the position/scholarship
  - c) The deadline for the scholarship. (Also whether the date is postmarked or has to be received by then)  
\*\* Make sure you are clear on how they want reference letters to be sent
  - d) Your resume
  - e) Your personal and professional goals (see attached sheet)
  - f) Any forms or specific instructions or questions requested by the position/scholarship for the letter of reference

**All items can be provided electronically rather than on paper. In fact, it would be easier for all concerned if you could email the teacher items a. – e., and provide an email address or website for submission of the letter.**

3. **Let the teacher know when you hear about your application, whether or not you got the position** – This will let the teacher have a good feeling of participation in your future, and will help her or him gauge future letters for you and other students.

## **A Few Other Key Points!!**

- 1) **Let the Career Centre know which scholarships you have been awarded. It helps us to plan for helping future students. We also like to acknowledge your achievements on the bulletin board outside of the SAC and on our website!**
- 2) **GIVE YOUR TEACHERS AT LEAST 2 WEEKS TO COMPLETE YOUR LETTER!!**



## Student Request for Reference Letter

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: 9 10 11 12 13

Date Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Required: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please give teacher a minimum of 2 weeks to complete)*

**Letter Requested for:** *(choose ONE only per request)*

- Job Application
- Scholarship/Bursary Application
- Post Secondary Program
- Character Reference
- General Reference (for future use)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: if you **TYPED** out all the information requested below, then you don't have to re-invent the wheel every time a scholarship application asks you for the same information – you can type each section in a word processor and then add, change and tweak it as needed for whatever you are applying for!

Number of Letters required: 1 2 3 4 5

Please email letter when complete to: \_\_\_\_\_

### INFORMATION

1. Academic Accomplishments:

2. Volunteerism/Leadership/Community Support:

3. Athletic involvement (school or community):

