

# 5 TIPS FOR COMPELLING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## DRAW THE READER IN

Your first sentence is important! With so much media coverage of what's happening, most of which doesn't get to the root issues or highlight the real impact of violence on Palestinians in Gaza, you really want to draw your reader in. You can use humor or start with something controversial or shocking.



## USE "I" STATEMENTS

"I" statements help to differentiate what you're writing from a regurgitation of the news. Ex. "I see," "I feel," "I think," and "I believe." Folks read the letters to the editor section to help them understand what their constituents and fellow community members care about and how they feel about different issues.



## SEND IT IN!

The most important thing you can do to improve the likelihood that your letter is published, is to explicitly refer to a recent news article. If your paper is published daily, the article you pick should be no more than a few days old. If your paper is published weekly, respond to an article in the last issue. Make sure you know the guidelines for your specific newspaper so you don't get rejected based on formatting.

## BE SPECIFIC

You'll likely only have around 200 words, so each one you choose is important. Don't use space quoting a long phrase or describing everything in detail. Though facts and statistics can be an important part of compellingly illustrating your point, because letters to the editor are so short, use them sparingly. Ensure your letter makes a specific ask to specific policymakers. If you mention your intended audience by name, the chances are higher that they or their staff will see it.



## WHY YOU?

Think about why you are writing this letter. What makes this letter different coming from you? What does being a constituent mean to you? How do you believe our government should work? What role do you play in your community? Referencing the answers to these questions in your letter can help you connect with your audience and draw on the power of your community.

