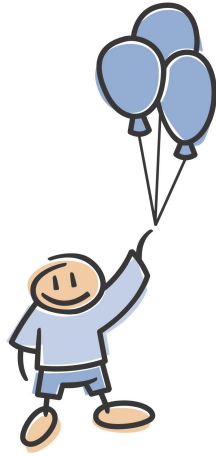


Name _____



Letters from Griffin

by Brenda B. Covert



Answer the following questions **BEFORE** you read this book. It is okay if you do not know as much as you thought. Do the best you can!

1. Share your feelings about writing letters. Why are fewer people writing letters these days? How has technology changed our communication habits? How do you feel when someone writes to you? How do you feel about writing back to that person?

[illegible]

2. Describe the reaction of a 13-year-old boy who has been told to write a letter to someone. What thoughts are in his head? How does he react? What do the people watching and listening to him do? How will he handle his pen and paper?

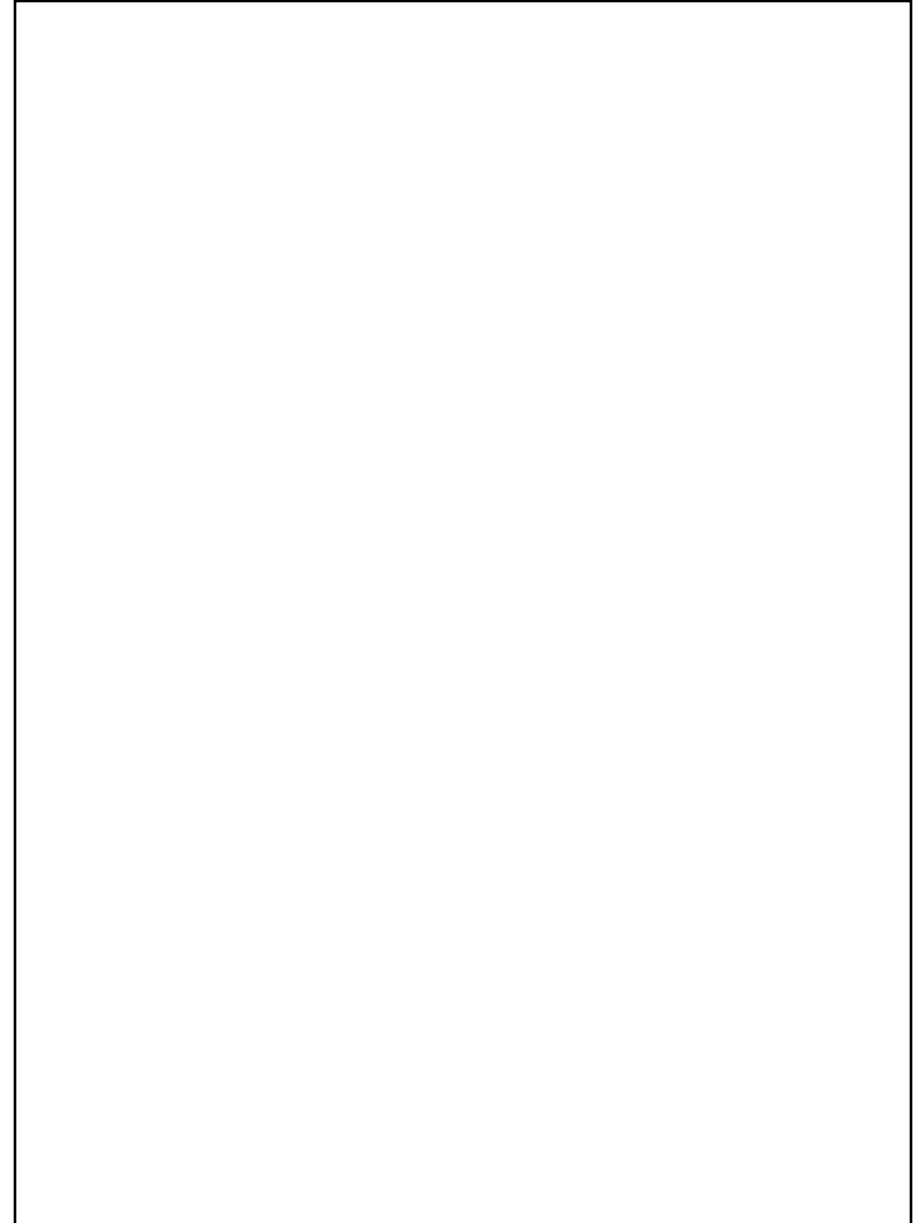
[illegible]

Draw Griffin sitting at a desk writing a letter while his mom watches him with her hands on her hips.

Dear brand new Pen Pal,

My name is Griffin, and I'm a 7th grader. Are you as annoyed - I mean happy - as I am that our moms signed us up to write letters to each other? This is so much better than online chatting. We get to use whole words and complete sentences! (If I use complete sentences, my reward is that I don't get grounded from my video games.) Best of all, in a letter I can draw things. Chatting online doesn't allow for much more than emoticons. Here's a drawing for you!

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin





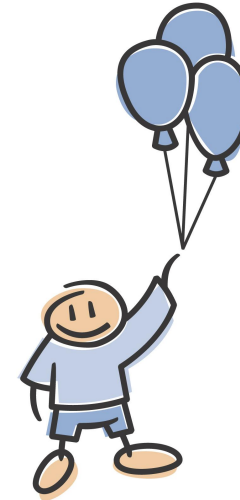
Dear Pen Pal,

I got your letter the other day. Mom found out about it today, and that's why I'm writing you back now and not trying to beat my high score in Danger Dawg.

Mom says I should tell you about myself. I'm in 7th grade. I go to school. I do homework. It is so much fun to be me! I'll tell you a secret. My great-grandpa was a pirate. Really! No fooling, he was a real live pirate! He forgot where he buried the treasure, though, so we're not rich or anything.

Here's a picture of Great-Grandpa.

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin

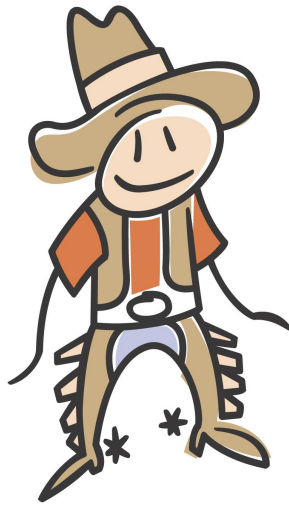


Dear Pen Pal,

How are you? Thank you for writing me back. That is very nice of you. How many people are in your family? Mom told me to ask. Scratch that - I am interested in learning more about you.

Since you told me that you have a birthday this month, I thought I'd send you some balloons. (See drawing.) LOL! I mean "laugh out loud!" (Mom says I can't write anything that looks like texting.) "Insert sad face here."

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin

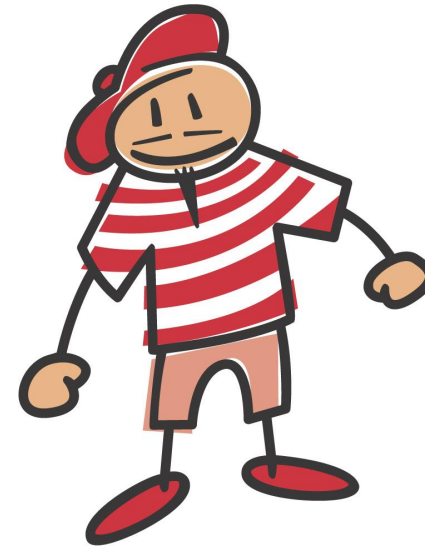


Dear Pen Pal,

I got a new game. It's called Fire Warrior. Have you heard of it? I need the cheat codes. Mom said cheating is wrong and won't let me look for them online. I tried to explain, but you know how it is.

Did you have a good birthday? Thank you for telling me about your family. Yes, I will try to ask easier questions next time. I did not know that you had so many brothers and sisters. I am an only child. Did I tell you that my great-grandpa was a rodeo cowboy?

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin



Dear Pen Pal,

How's it going? Sorry about the confusion over my great-grandpas. Everyone has four, you know. So it does too make sense that one was a pirate and one was a cowboy. Another one was a painter - the famous kind, not a house painter. I want to be an artist like him when I grow up.

I'm going to draw you a quick picture and seal this letter up before Mom gets a chance to read it.

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin



Dear Pen Pal,

I got your letter yesterday. Mom said I had to write back today if I want to watch TV tonight. Does your mom do that to you? I don't really have anything to tell you today. I doodled on my math test and got a bad grade because I didn't know the answers, so Mom took away my games. "Insert angry face here."

Which would you rather do: ride a runaway roller coaster or kiss a porcupine? I will draw my answer for you.

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin

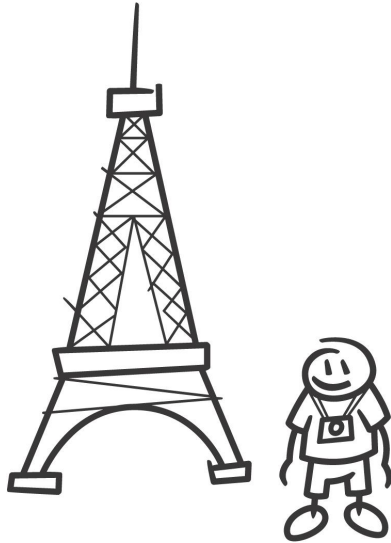


Dear Pen Pal,

I found a funny video online. It is of a boy in Germany trying to play a game on his computer. He gets mad and beats on stuff and throws his keyboard around. He's yelling in German, but I can guess what he's saying. If I threw a fit like that, my mom would kill me! Mom came in while I was laughing at the video. She made me show it to her. She did not think it was funny. Moms are like that.

Have you ever been to Yosemite National Park? I would like to go there and ride on a geyser. I'm not sure how to get down without getting hurt, but I'm sure I could come up with a good plan. (Don't tell my family, or they'll never let me get near a geyser.)

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin



Dear Pen Pal,

Sorry it took me so long to write back. I flew to France last week. Dad was on a secret mission. Did I tell you that he's a secret agent? Shhhh! Don't tell! (It's a secret.) I'm not supposed to know. I'm supposed to think he works for a tire company. We climbed the Eiffel Tower and ate snails. Have you ever eaten snails? They were salty.

What is the worst thing you have ever eaten?
(For me, it was snails.)

Don't forget to write back,
Griffin



Dear Pen Pal,

I can't believe you ate fried squid rings! I think I'm going to be sick. J/K - just kidding.

Dad took me on another secret mission. This time Spain was our destination. I ran with the bulls. Really! My nickname is Speedy G.

Oops, here comes Mom. Better fold and seal!

Write back,
Griffin

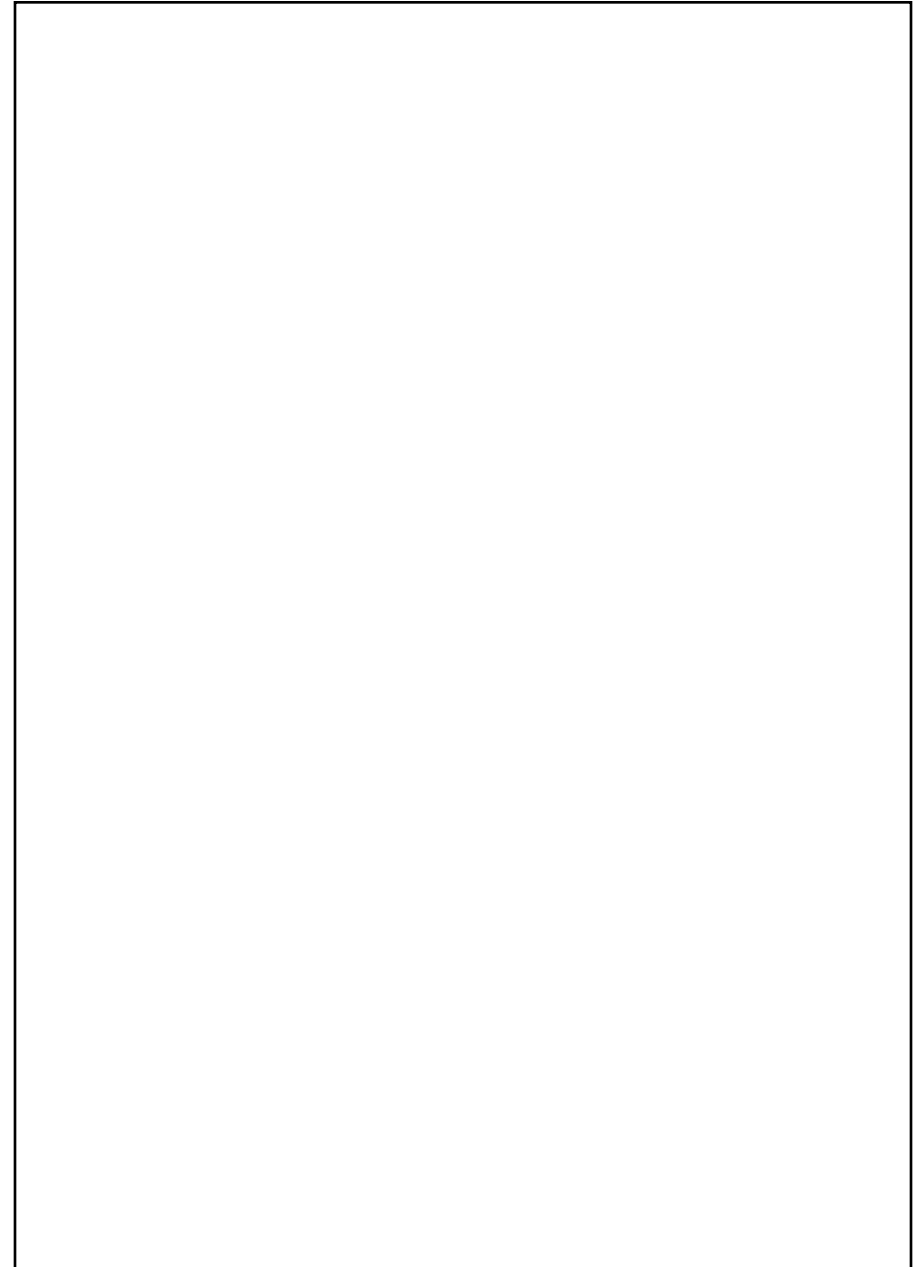
Draw Griffin holding a video game and looking very happy.

Dear Pen Pal,

Mom read your last letter and said to tell you that I was joking about going to France and Spain. Moms have no sense of humor. (She also said to tell you that my dad really works for a tire company, but I'm not fooled.)

I can't believe you're just now getting around to telling me that your dad creates video games! He's my new hero! Can you send me any free games for my game system? That would be awesome! This pen pal thing could really have some benefits, kwim -- know what I mean?

Write back soon,
Griffin



Answer the following questions **AFTER** you have completed this book.

1. Imagine that Griffin and his pen pal meet on vacation. How do they greet each other? What surprises each about the other? What do they do together? Write a short story telling about the day they finally meet. Use lots of details in your description of their meeting. Include several similes in your description.

[illegible]

15

2. Describe the moment when Griffin is caught in a lie. How does he feel inside? How does his appearance change? What does he say? What does he do? Describe it in such a way that the reader feels what Griffin feels.

[illegible]

3. List three things that you learned about Griffin.

16

4. Circle three emotions that Griffin expressed in his letters.

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Remorse | Fright | Annoyance |
| Loneliness | Jealousness | Anger |
| Depression | Excitement | |

5. Why do you suppose Griffin's mother wanted him to have a pen pal?

6. Griffin's letters were not very truthful. List two of his statements that his pen pal most likely believed were false.

7. If I had to choose one form of written communication, I'd choose _____
If I could choose a second form of communication, it would be _____