**A cover letter is a one-page document** sent with a resume or job application. Its purpose is to introduce the applicant to the employer, highlight relevant skills and experiences, and express interest in the position. The cover letter should demonstrate your personality and enthusiasm while explaining why you are a strong candidate for the job.

## What a Cover Letter Should Include:

1. **Contact Information**:
   - Your name, address, phone number, and email (typically at the top)
   - The date
   - Employer's name, title, company name, and address (below your information)
2. **Salutation**:
   - Address the letter to a specific person, if possible. If the contact person is unknown, use a greeting like "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear [Department Name] Team."
3. **Introduction**:
   - State the position you're applying for and how you found out about it.
   - Briefly introduce yourself and express your interest in the role.
   - Mention any mutual contacts or referrals, if applicable.
4. **Body**:
   - **Paragraph 1**: Discuss why you're interested in the company and the position. Show that you've researched the company and how its goals or values align with yours.
   - **Paragraph 2**: Highlight your relevant skills, qualifications, and experiences. Explain how these make you a good fit for the job. Share specific examples of your achievements or projects that align with the job requirements.
   - **Paragraph 3**: Mention any additional qualities or experiences that make you stand out, such as internships, volunteer work, or extracurricular involvement.
5. **Conclusion**:
   - Reiterate your enthusiasm for the position.
   - Thank the employer for considering your application.
   - Express your desire for an interview and provide your availability.
   - End with a professional closing (e.g., "Sincerely," "Best regards").
6. **Signature**:
   - If you're sending a physical letter, leave space for your signature above your typed name. For email, your typed name is sufficient.

## Outline for a Cover Letter:

1. **Header:**
   ○ Your Name
   ○ City, State, ZIP Code
   ○ Phone Number
   ○ Email Address
   ○ Blank Line

2. **Date**

3. **Company Name**
   ○ Full two line mailing address

4. **Salutation**:
   ○ Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

5. **Introduction**:
   ○ Introduction of yourself and the role you are applying for.
   ○ Mention how you found out about the position and why you're interested.

6. **Body**:
   ○ Paragraph 1: Why you're interested in the company and role.
   ○ Paragraph 2: Your relevant experience, skills, and qualifications.
   ○ Paragraph 3: Additional qualifications or unique experiences.

7. **Conclusion**:
   ○ Reiterate your interest.
   ○ Express thanks and mention interview availability.

8. **Closing**:
   ○ Professional closing (e.g., "Sincerely")
   ○ Typed name (and signature if applicable)

## Question Prompts to Help Students Develop Their Own Cover Letter:

1. **Introduction**:
   - What position are you applying for?
   - How did you find out about this job?
   - Why are you excited about this opportunity?

2. **Body**:
   - What do you know about the company or organization? Why do you want to work for them?
   - What are your key skills or experiences that align with the job requirements?
   - What is one specific example of a project, class, or experience that demonstrates your ability to do this job?

3. **Additional Qualities**:
   - Do you have any unique qualifications or experiences that set you apart from other candidates?
   - How have your extracurricular activities, internships, or volunteer work prepared you for this position?

4. **Conclusion**:
   - Why are you a strong fit for this role, and what value will you bring to the company?
   - How can the employer contact you for an interview?
   - When are you available to interview, and are there any special considerations to mention (e.g., relocation, start date)?