



**Step 3** Students review classified ads to find area businesses or job postings of interest. They will use the contact information provided when writing their letter(s).

**Step 4** Distribute computers. Instruct the students how to login and open Word. Students select “New Blank Document” and then type their letter of inquiry to a selected business. For students who are unfamiliar with Word, the “Word Basics” handout provides detailed instructions for creating a new document, saving a document, using spell-check, and printing a document.

**Step 5** After students have typed and edited their pieces in Word, have them compare their letter to the guidelines. If there are any areas in which they need help or improvement, they should meet with the teacher for assistance and revise as necessary.

**Assessment/Evidence**

Letter of Inquiry – Put (a copy of) this in portfolio to demonstrate mastery of benchmarks related to the Basic Skills Stackable Certificate.

**Adaptations for Beginning Students**

Beginning students may need more specific instruction in business letter format. They could also use the Letter Wizard in Word, which guides them to enter information into a template. Additionally, beginning students may need to work one-on-one with a teacher or aide.

**Adaptations for Advanced Students**

**Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation**

This lesson was created by Middletown ABLE.

## Letter of Inquiry Guidelines

### *What is a letter of inquiry?*

A letter of inquiry is a letter that is written to a business in order to determine whether there are current or anticipated job opportunities with the company. It serves as a means for you to introduce yourself and briefly explain your interest in the company and position.

### *What content should be included?*

The letter provides you with the opportunity to introduce yourself, state your interest in the position or company, request information, and initiate further communication (such as an application or follow-up phone conversation).

### Suggested organization:

- In the first paragraph, state why you are writing. (Are you responding to a classified ad you saw in the newspaper? Did a friend recommend you contact the company? Are you interested in learning about possible jobs in a certain field?) You can also include basic personal information about yourself such as your related certification or training or expected graduation date.
- In the second paragraph, explain why you are interested in this specific company or business. Explain how your qualifications are related to the company's needs.
- In the third paragraph, initiate further communication. You can indicate that you would like additional information or to discuss the position in more detail. State a specific plan of action such as *I will call you next week to discuss employment opportunities with your company.* Finally, be sure to thank the contact person for his/her consideration or assistance.

### *How should the letter be formatted?*

- The letter should follow proper business letter format.
- Address the letter to a specific person at the company if possible. Often, a contact person will be included in the job posting. It is sometimes possible to find the name of the business owner or director of human resources by visiting the company's website. Be sure to use appropriate titles and spell names correctly.
- Spelling, punctuation, and grammar should be perfect. This letter makes a first impression; if it contains errors, the company is not likely to respond.
- Because this letter is an introduction and request, it should be fairly brief. Try to limit the length to a maximum of one page.

Your Street Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Telephone Number

Today's Date

Mr./Ms./Dr. First Name Last Name  
Title  
Name of Company  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

1st paragraph: State your purpose for writing and briefly introduce yourself.

2nd paragraph: Explain why you are interested in this company or why you are qualified for the position.

3rd paragraph: Initiate further communications and thank the contact for her/his consideration or assistance.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature*



4 lines between closing and typed name

Your name typed

After you have completed a draft of a letter of inquiry, check it for the following:

- Business letter format, including
  - return address
  - date
  - name and address of the receiver
  - appropriate salutation
  - body
  - closing
  - signature and typed name
- Appropriate content, including
  - Stated purpose for your letter (Why are you writing?)
  - Reasons for your interest in this company or job
  - Summary of your qualifications
  - Suggested follow-up communication
- Letter is organized
- Perfect spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Letter is typed
- Length = one page or less

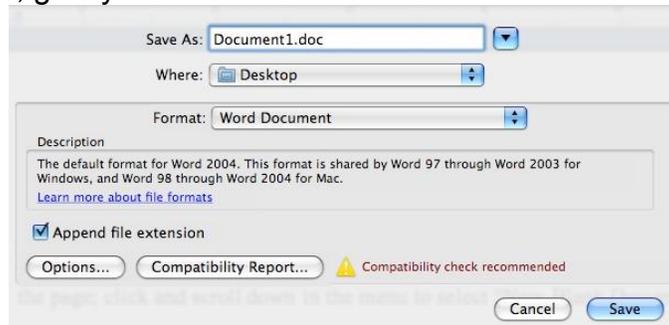
## Word Basics



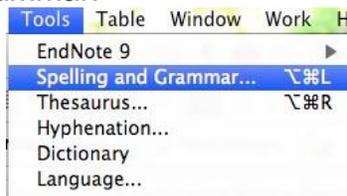
1. Click the  icon to start Microsoft Word. This should automatically open a new blank document. If it doesn't, go to File on the menu bar at the top of the page; click and scroll down in the menu to select "New Blank Document."

2. Type your document.

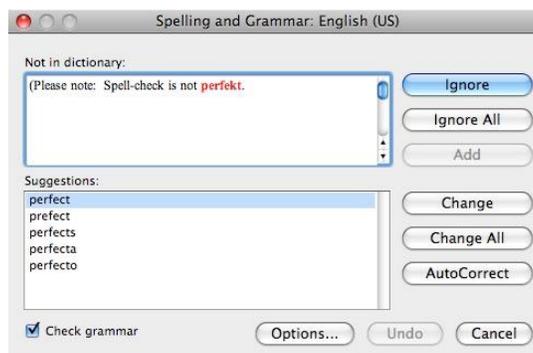
3. Go to the File menu at the top of the screen. Click and scroll down to "Save As". When the box opens, give your document a title in the "Save As" box.



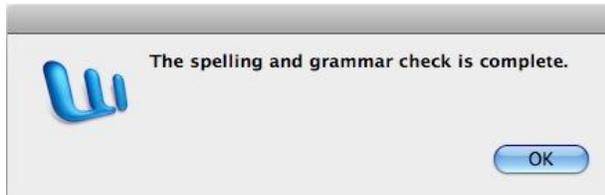
4. After you have saved your document, you will use the program to check your spelling and grammar. Go to the Tools menu at the top of the screen. Click and scroll down to "Spelling and Grammar."



5. The computer has a built-in dictionary and it will check your document to be sure your words make sense. Each time it thinks it finds an error, it will highlight the test and suggest changes. (Please note: Spell-check is not perfect. You need to read the suggestions carefully to determine if it is correcting words properly.) Choose the correct suggested change and click the "Change" button. If the computer identifies an error that is not really an error (such as the spelling of a name), click "Ignore" and it will skip that error.

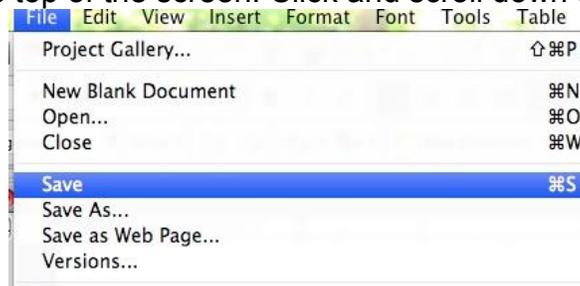


6. Once the spelling and grammar check is complete, you will see the following notice:

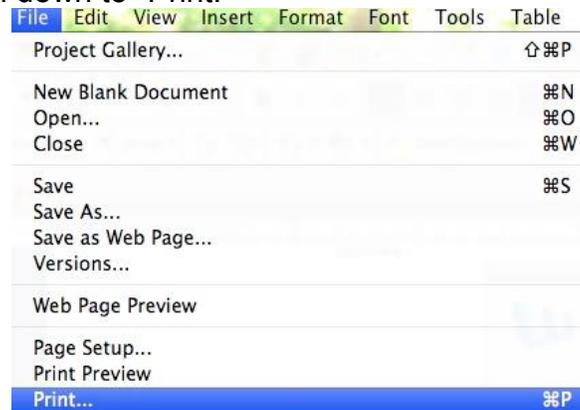


Click OK.

7. After the spelling and grammar check is complete, save your document again. Go to the File menu on the top of the screen. Click and scroll down to "Save."



8. Now it is time to print your document. Go to the File menu on the top of the screen. Click and scroll down to "Print."



Another dialogue box will open. Click "Print" and your document will print at the attached printer.