

Dear Third Grade Teachers,

We hope that the enclosed letters from imaginary animals living on the Reserve help to prepare third grade students for their field trip to the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve later this school year.

We encourage teachers to adapt the letters to their class's needs by using them in ways that are most beneficial to the students. The animal letters were written to accommodate a wide range of student reading skills, knowledge, and experience. If the letters seem too long, appear to have difficult vocabulary words and/or describe concepts which are unfamiliar to the students, then please adapt them. The letters are designed to be read by the teacher or by individual students, with partners, or in co-operative groups. Concepts and vocabulary may be pre-taught or be discussed when met within the letter. Some third grade teachers explore the animal letters in one day while others choose to use several days to review them. Parts of the letters may be omitted. Perhaps the animal letters might be a starting point for research reports and the vocabulary for vocabulary development. One teacher even used the letters for Reader's Theater.

As you can see, the letters may be adapted and used in a variety of ways. We hope the letters are an interesting and useful tool for teaching third grade students about the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve and to assist teachers to meet CA standards in science, social science and language arts.

Sincerely,

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Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Park Aide

Riverside County Park & Open Space District