

Formal Letter Prompt

When Andrew Carnegie was 33 years old, he had already worked for 20 years! He started working at the age of 12, and all of his hard work and investments had paid off. With his earnings, Andrew Carnegie determined that if he stopped working, he could give himself an income from his investments of \$50,000 a year for the rest of his life! This income would allow him to live quite comfortably. But Andrew Carnegie wanted more from life than money. So, he wrote himself a letter. In that letter he told himself that in two years time he wanted to stop working and instead begin to give his fortune away to the betterment of mankind. Carnegie placed this letter in a sealed envelope in his desk drawer.

You will be writing a letter to your future self. In this letter you will first explain Napoleon Hill's formula for success and how it has affected people's lives. For this part of the assignment you will need to research two people whose lives have been impacted by Napoleon Hill's success theory.

- What were their dreams?
- How did they direct their minds toward achieving their dreams?
- What values did they hold that allowed them to achieve their dreams?
- How were they successful?

List of people inspired by Napoleon Hill's work (select 2)
Thomas Edison (inventor of the lightbulb) Theodore Roosevelt (president) John D. Rockefeller (industrialist) Henry Ford (inventor of the car) Alexander Graham Bell (inventor of the telephone) King Gillette Bill Gates (programmer, owner of Microsoft) Arnold Schwarzenegger (body builder, actor, governor) Marty Cooper (inventor of the cell phone) Steve Wozniak (co-founder of Apple) Nik Halik (astronaut, CEO) Gene Landrum (founder of Chuck E. Cheese) Frank Shankwitz (founder of the Make-A-Wish Foundation) Matt Mullenweg (founder of WordPress) Leah O'Brien-Amico (Olympic Gold Medalist) Pem Dorjee Sherpa (Mt. Everest Record Holder) Anousheh Ansari (astronaut)

You will then write a clear description of your main desire in life—your idea of success. How do you want this idea of success to influence your actions and values?

Place the final letter in a sealed envelope and mark the envelope: "Open and read when you are ___ years old."

Paragraph 1: Introduction

If you are reading this letter you are ____ years old. I am writing to you to remind you about the dream that you had for your life when you were ____ years old. Your major desire in life was to _____

Paragraph 2: Body—Napoleon Hill

- What did he believe?
- Describe his formula for success.
- Name two people whose lives were impacted by his work.

Paragraph 3: Body—Person #1

- What was his or her dream?
- How did this person direct his or her mind toward achieving this dream?
- What values did this person hold that allowed her or him to achieve this dream?
- How was this person successful?

Paragraph 4: Body—Person #2

- What was his or her dream?
- How did this person direct his or her mind toward achieving this dream?
- What values did this person hold that allowed her or him to achieve this dream?
- How was this person successful?

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

Do you still dream of...

(Tell how you hope this dream will influence your actions.)

(Tell how you hope this dream will influence your values or beliefs.)

(Write a concluding statement.)

Formal Writing (Sample): Letter to My Future Self

If you are reading this letter you are 30 years old. I am writing to you to remind you about the dream that you had for your life when you were 12 years old. Your major desire in life was to own a successful bakery that makes wedding cakes and cupcakes.

Do you remember reading about Napoleon Hill in sixth grade? Napoleon Hill was a man whose life was dedicated to helping people be successful. He believed that success was in the reach of every person. His famous book Think and Grow Rich sold over 30 million copies! His formula for success describes how directing your mind toward what you want to accomplish will allow you to achieve your dream. He warns you to avoid fear, worry, discouragement, greed, and anger because these things will keep you from your dream. His formula has affected the lives of many people including Thomas Edison and Bill Gates.

Thomas Edison had very little education, but he was determined to become self-educated. He began working when he was only 13 years old! His dream was to one day invent things that people would want. Not all of his inventions were successful, but Thomas Edison never gave up his dream! He worked very hard at something he enjoyed doing and did not allow himself to become discouraged. His most famous invention was the lightbulb.

Bill Gates was also inspired by Napoleon Hill's success formula. He began programming computers at the age of 13. After studying at Harvard, he formed the Microsoft corporation. Today, Bill Gates is a very rich man, but he is dedicated to giving his money away to help improve global health and education. I think he believes Napoleon Hill's philosophy that it is better to give than to receive.

Do you still dream of owning a bakery? I hope this dream is still a dream you can see in your mind. You can achieve this dream if you put your mind to it. Focus your actions on hard work and positive thinking. Don't give up when times get tough. If you become frustrated or discouraged, you won't achieve your dream. Remember—whatever you give will come back to you. You will have to give time to learn about running a bakery, and you will have to give hard work to get your bakery started. I know you can achieve your dream! Be careful not to become envious of others. Believe that you will accomplish your dream!

Sincerely,
You, age 12