



Paralympic Education Program



Paralympic Pen Pals

Below you will find some fun activities that will help you learn more about the Australian Paralympic Team and help you write your message.

To submit your message, head back to the [Paralympic Pen Pals](#) page and fill in the form.

I need help writing my message to my favourite Paralympian!



Which athlete should I write to?

Did you know that Australia usually sends over 150 athletes to a Summer Paralympic Games and over 10 athletes to a Winter Paralympic Games?

You can find the profiles of all the Paralympians and Paralympic athletes [here](#).

If you know the name of an athlete, you can type their name in the search box. Otherwise try searching by sport or disability type.

How do I write a good message?

Before you start:

1. Find out some information about the athlete before writing your message.

Do some research on your athlete by using the profiles above or by doing a Google search. Make sure you also research any sports or disabilities you are unfamiliar with.

2. Establish the purpose of the message.

Why are you writing to your chosen Paralympian? Do you want to find out more about them? Do you want to send them a message to encourage and inspire them? Do you want to find out how they have overcome challenges in their life?

3. Establish the tone of your message.

Is this a formal or informal letter? Remember, you aren't texting your best friend so you will need to write in full sentences and use proper grammar, but you also aren't writing to the Queen, so your letter can be a little more casual.

Give it a go! Read the messages below and decide if you think they are appropriate for this type of message. Make sure you give a reason for your answer.

Sup BFF howz it going.	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
Hi Ellie, I hope your training is going well.	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
Thanks for taking the time to read my letter. From, Billy.	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
Dear Sir/Madam,	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
Yours faithfully, Richard Smith.	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
U gunna win gold and u r amazing!	YES NO	Reason for your answer:
I wish you the best of luck with your training and look forward to seeing you compete.	YES NO	Reason for your answer:

Writing your message:

1. Decide what questions you would like to ask the athlete in your message.

You might like to ask them questions about their sport, how and when they started competing. In a written message, you should try and ask open questions. An open question is a question that requires more than a one-word answer. It means you will get more information from the response.

Give it a go! Read the questions below and decide if you think they are an open or closed question.

What is your favourite colour?	OPEN CLOSED
Do you like swimming?	OPEN CLOSED
What did you do on the weekend?	OPEN CLOSED
Do you enjoy watching the Paralympic Games?	OPEN CLOSED
What makes an athlete successful?	OPEN CLOSED
What is your opinion of the Paralympic Games?	OPEN CLOSED
Are you going to write a message to a Paralympian?	OPEN CLOSED

Now see if you can turn these closed questions into open questions?

What sport do you participate in?



Have you been to a Paralympic Games before?



What is the name of your disability?

How long have you been competing for?

How many hours do you train for each week?

2. Include some information about yourself that you are happy to share.

Remember, you don't know the athlete personally so don't share specific details but just enough so they know who they are writing back to. You might like to include your age, any similarities you might have in common with the athlete such as the sports you participate in. You might like to explain what you know about them or the Paralympic Games and why you decided to write to them.

3. Think of a message that will inspire our Australian Paralympians.

This can be as fun and creative as you want. Make sure it is a personal message from you rather than a generic statement you found on the internet.



I want to do more to inspire and cheer on the Australian Paralympic Team!

Show your support of the Australian Paralympic Team by organising a fundraiser at your school. [Here](#) you will find plenty of great resources to get you started.