

# First Letter Starters

## First Letters for Pen-Pal Encouragers

### Keep it Simple!!

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Hello! It's nice to "meet" you!

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I heard you're interested in having a PrisonCare pen-pal. I guess I should start by telling you a bit about myself.

*CHOOSE PERHAPS 4 OF THE FOLLOWING TO INCLUDE:*

- I do this for a living.
- I used to do that for a living.
- I like to read \_\_\_\_\_ (genre).
- I love to watch \_\_\_\_\_ movies (genre).
- I like \_\_\_\_\_ music (genre; specific artists).
- My husband/wife's name is \_\_\_\_\_.
- I like to travel. A favorite trip/spot is \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have dogs/cats/birds, and their names are \_\_\_\_\_.
- I enjoy cooking/crafting/gardening/photography. (Share one specific example of a project.)
- I grew up in a large/small family.
- I have \_\_\_\_\_ (number) kids/grandkids.
- I loved/hated school.
- I play \_\_\_\_\_ (sport). I recently \_\_\_\_\_(share about a run, a game, a match).
- I play this instrument.
- I have always wanted to learn to play this instrument.
- I love \_\_\_\_\_ food. (type, ethnicity)
- I am a coffee/tea drinker.
- I am a morning person/night owl.
- I am an introvert/extrovert.
- I am scared of \_\_\_\_\_ (phobia).
- When I was little, I wanted to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
- I am tall/short.
- I am right/left-handed.

**In your first letter, you said that you are** (*reflect back* something specific they said to show that you are thinking of them as an individual, perhaps one of the following):

- feeling lonely much of the time
- missing family you can't connect with
- working on the 7 Habits class
- working on your GED
- working on vocational training (be specific - carpentry, culinary, etc.)
- a musician
- a writer

- a fitness enthusiast
- waiting for a move
- waiting for a new job
- waiting for an incentive housing placement
- waiting for a parole hearing
- encouraged by your faith
- trying to be a positive person in your facility
- trying to mentor others
- learning a new language

## **Tell me a little bit more about yourself!**

*CHOOSE PERHAPS 2 OF THE FOLLOWING:*

- Do you have a job in the prison? Do you like it?
- What kind of movies or tv do you like?
- Are you a morning person or a night owl?
- Would you describe yourself as shy or outgoing?
- What kind of exercise do you like to do?
- Do you do any kind of artwork?
- Do you speak a second language?
- Are you enrolled in any programs?
- Are you a cat person, a dog person, or not an animal person at all?
- If you had to choose Italian food or Chinese, which would you pick?
- Are you a coffee drinker? Tea drinker? Neither?

## **I'm looking forward to hearing from you again when you have a chance to write.**

*CHOOSE A CLOSING STATEMENT THAT FEELS AUTHENTIC, PERHAPS ONE OF THESE:*

Take good care of yourself!

I hope you find reasons to smile today.

I'm glad you reached out to our PrisonCare team.

It will be cool to get to know one another.

Be encouraged!

I respect the way you're looking to make good connections to others!

Look for the moments that remind you of goodness!

May you find some laughter today where you least expect it!

Thanks for giving us a chance to get to know each other a bit.

I hope my letter brought you a smile.

*Sign by hand.*

*Maybe add a one-line P.S. handwritten, or a little doodle.*

*Mail it!*