

A Letter to Mam



14 Eaton Manor,
Abbeyvale,
Dublin 37.

Hi Mam,

I know you've only been away for a few days but I thought I'd write to let you know that we are all getting along just fine. I hope the weather in Australia is good. It has to be better than the weather here. It rained all last night, and we forgot to close the attic skylight.

Still, we have mopped up most of the water, so no worries there.

Dad cooked us a super tea the day you left on your holiday. We had chips and pizza and a big fry-up. He said it was every bit as good for us as the healthy stuff you cook. Dad will have the scorch marks on the kitchen ceiling painted over by the time you get back, so you'll hardly notice where the chip pan went on fire. We had lots of Coke too. He said he knew we were allergic to it, but he thought it might cheer us up a bit because you were gone. I was only sick twice, but Alan was up most of the night. You should have seen his bed!

Anyway, since then, Dad has bought us a Chinese takeaway, an Indian takeaway and a Southern Fried Chicken takeaway, and he said he might take us to a burger joint tonight. That might depend on when the man comes to fix the washing machine though. Dad thought it was the dishwasher. He said it was a very easy mistake to make, and we were all a bit tired after staying up to watch the late-night horror movie.

Dad was very good at getting the washing sorted out without the washing machine. We had great fun putting all the laundry in the bath and swirling it around with the handle of the sweeping brush. It was a bit strange when all the white clothes changed colour, but Dad says that pinky-grey underwear is all the fashion.

Anyway, never mind all that boring stuff about us! How are you? I bet you're out relaxing in the sun without a worry in the world! Give my love to Aunt Laura and Uncle Ken. I bet their new house is lovely.

I'll have to go now because I promised Dad I'd help him fix that broken vase – the one Granny gave you.

Enjoy the next five weeks. You lucky thing!

Lots of love and kisses,

Emma XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Question Time

A

1. Who is writing the letter?
2. To whom is she writing it?
3. Why is she writing it?
4. Where is her mother?
5. How long has her mother been away?
6. Who is in charge of the house while she is away?
7. What did the father cook for the children?
8. What happened to the washing machine?
9. What accident happened in the kitchen with the chip pan?
10. How did the father wash all the clothes?
11. What happened to the clothes when they were washed?
12. For how long is the children's mother going to be away?
13. Make a list of the things you think the father might have done wrong.
14. Name the different countries mentioned in the letter.

B

1. Why did the family have to mop up lots of water?
2. Why did the father let the children have cola to drink?
3. What do you think is the father's opinion of healthy food?
4. Do you think the children's mother would agree with him?
5. List the different types of food mentioned in the story.
6. Why is the mother in Australia?
7. Do you think the children's father knows the contents of Emma's letter? Why?
8. How do you think the mother is going to react when she reads the letter?
9. Do you think the mother will enjoy her stay in Australia? Say why.
10. Do you think the father was doing a good job? Say why.
11. What do you think is the worst thing the father has done?
12. Emma is writing a cheerful letter with lots of news.
Do you think this will cheer her mother up? Say why.
13. Do you think Emma's letter will cause trouble for her father?
14. What do you think Emma's father might say to her if he knew what she was writing?

Think and Talk

1. Talk about what a healthy lunch should contain.
2. Talk about the effects of eating junk food.
3. Do you think it is easy to take care of a household? Say why.
4. Write the reply the mother might now send to Emma.