

Name:

## Day One

# A Letter Home

### Part 1: Silent read

➔ What was life like for a U.S. Marine in Iraq? Read silently.

In September 2006, a young Marine in Iraq wrote a letter to a few friends and family members. “It’s a struggle to think of anything to put into a letter,” he wrote. In fact, this letter appealed to people. They passed it along to friends. Eventually, the letter was printed in *Time* magazine. Many Americans wanted to hear this firsthand perspective on the war.

The Marine was exhausted. He said, “I work 18 to 20 hour days, every day.” Still, he shared funny stories. He stocked up on Diet Coke at the canteen just before a rocket blew up the soda supply for the entire base. He said, “Worst smell—porta-johns in 120-degree heat.”

However, most of his news was sad and subdued. Every time he heard a crack-boom in the distance, he knew it was an IED going off. He told about his respect for Iraqi policemen, and for the experts who defused bombs. He wrote about the death of a friend. “He was a great Marine,” he said. “I felt crushed for a long time afterward.”

A high for his unit was helping to rescue a U.S. reporter who had been kidnapped. Obtaining her release was a huge thrill.

The young Marine also wrote about his happiest moment. “Well, it wasn’t in Iraq. It was back in California, when I was able to hold my family again,” he said. “There are no truly happy moments here.”

Source: “The secret letter from Iraq,” *Time*, October 6, 2006.



## Day One

// one minute

# A Letter Home

### Part 2: First timed read

WPM \_\_\_\_\_

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### Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

What was life like in Iraq for the young Marine?

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What was a high point for the Marine and his unit?

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## Day One

# A Letter Home

### Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

In September 2006, / a young Marine in Iraq wrote a letter / to a few friends and family members. // “It’s a struggle to think of anything to put into a letter,” / he wrote. // In fact, / this letter appealed to people. // They passed it along to friends. // Eventually, / the letter was printed in *Time* magazine. // Many Americans wanted to hear / this firsthand perspective on the war. //

The Marine was exhausted. // He said, / “I work 18 to 20 hour days, / every day.” // Still, / he shared funny stories. // He stocked up on Diet Coke at the canteen / just before a rocket blew up the soda supply for the entire base. // He said, / “Worst smell— / porta-johns in 120-degree heat.” //

However, / most of his news was sad and subdued. // Every time he heard a crack-boom in the distance, / he knew it was an IED going off. // He told about his respect for Iraqi policemen, / and for the experts who defused bombs. // He wrote about the death of a friend. // “He was a great Marine,” / he said. // “I felt crushed for a long time afterward.” //

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The young Marine also wrote about his happiest moment. // “Well, it wasn’t in Iraq. // It was back in California, / when I was able to hold my family again,” / he said. // “There are no truly happy moments here.” //

I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.