

School of Journalism and Mass Communication

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Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

March 18, 1991

Gerald Johnson  
Loyola High School  
Shreveport, La.

Dear Mr. Johnson,

For some reason, you've been on my mind a lot recently and I thought I'd write you before the memory fades. Essentially, I just want to say "thanks" for all you did for me while I attended Jesuit. I know I was just another student, neither particularly bright nor an especially dumb pupil. For that, all I can say was just I was a kid, having fun like all the rest of my buddies.

But Mr. Johnson, I thought and still do think that you were the best teacher at Jesuit and the best I ever had. You really cared about us in that you loved your subject and you loved to teach it and you always made sure that we at least had some basic understanding of it.

That's a special gift because, you see, I decided to become a math major at LSUS. And I had my share of bad math teachers (especially in calculus and linear algebra); so I know what good teaching is like. I changed my majors, finally realizing that I didn't want to major in math because I liked math; rather, I wanted to become a math major because I liked you; you were my hero.

To make a long story short, I have realized also that what I really wanted to do was teach -- and that's what I'm doing here at Kent State, where I'm a struggling assistant professor teaching kids how to write and report. It's a thankless job sometimes, but usually I like it and the sight of the kids' stories in the paper makes it all worthwhile.

Also, as a teacher, I know that you don't always get to experience that sort of satisfaction. That's another reason I'm writing you -- to tell you that you made a difference in my life and to let you know that the work you do does make a difference. I know you know that, but it's nice to hear it every now and then.

So remember this letter when you have a room full of rowdy kids or a bunch of kids that don't stick out. One day, like me, they'll thank you for all you're doing.

God bless you, Mr. Johnson!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Sylvie".

George Sylvie  
Class of '72

Dear Mr. Johnson,

March 12, 1961

1400 W. 10th Street  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Your letter of the 10th was received and I am glad to hear that you are still in the hospital. I had written you before the hospital and I was sure that you would get the letter. I hope you are feeling better now. I am sure that you will be home soon.

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Very truly,  
John F. Kennedy