

MY NAME

Greetings from Venice Beach pg 9

POST CARD

GREETINGS FROM VENICE BEACH, CALIFORNIA

INDIGENOUS RUGBY PLAYER MATT SONTER AND VIBE'S MAYRAH BUTT DROPPED US A LINE FROM LOS ANGELES

I've just moved to LA to join my fiancé, Matt Sonter. Matt arrived a week earlier than me to start training with his Santa Monica teammates before the start of the US Super League Rugby season.

Who would've thought this Wiradjuri girl from Redfern and a Gamilaroi boy from Newcastle would be living in California's famous Venice Beach area? Movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger is Governor of California, and now Barack Obama is US President. Talk about Deadly!

Living in Los Angeles is simply overwhelming. There is so much choice - if you wanted to, you could order a triple espresso mocha light frappuccino grande with caramel swirl and whipped cream at Starbucks! The city is very spread out and we can't help but think we're living in a TV show.

We live a block from Venice Beach. It's quite a bohemian neighbourhood, with lots of laidback surfing locals and eccentric characters busking for the tourists. Our favourites are the rollerblading guitar player in

a turban, and the snake tamer in a loincloth atop a ladder. These you have to see to believe!

In an attempt to make LA feel more like home, we've adopted one of the Santa Monica old boys as our 'Uncle Bobby' while we're here. He's always taking care of us and making delicious Sunday night dinners. We also have a support network in the 14 other players on the team.

Matt is here to help USA Rugby with their vision for the game and to promote the fact that Rugby is a world game - it's the third most played sport in the world, behind soccer and athletics. Matt says the Santa Monica players are some of the best athletes he has ever played alongside and he is enjoying helping them develop their Rugby skills.

Matt's schedule is keeping us both busy; he has training every day of the week, twice on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and games

on Saturday afternoons. Matt has also been invited to train at Velocity, a US Olympic-training facility for the country's best athletes. All this training is paying off because after three rounds, Matt is the highest point scorer in the US Super League.

Off the Rugby field, Matt is working with school children in the Inner City Education Foundation (ICEF) Public Schools program. The ICEF program, which incorporates Rugby into after-school activities, has conducted Rugby tours to Hong Kong, England and New Zealand; Australia may be next. We hope that Matt's work as a role model for the ICEF program and networking with local universities will create opportunities for some of our talented Indigenous young fellas at home to study and play in the US.

All this success isn't without its challenges, and missing home is the top of the list, followed by Gran's cooking, walking our dogs and seeing our loved ones. We're keeping in touch through emails, Facebook and Skype. Doses of the Vibe website and *The Sydney Morning Herald* online help, too.

We've still found time to check out some of the area's famous tourist attractions and our family and friends are coming to visit in a few weeks. We'll also be travelling for some games to places like Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Las Vegas and New York.

In just a couple of months the season here will be over. We'll have to say our goodbyes to all our new friends and, with luck, move onto our next Rugby adventure. Travelling has certainly proved to us that we are fortunate to live in Australia.

*Love to the family,
Matthew Sonter
& Mayrah Butt*

www.santamonicarugby.com

Mayrah Butt and her fiancé Matthew Sonter have just moved to Los Angeles in California, on America's west coast.

Matthew is playing rugby union for Santa Monica. Matthew is training hard and has already made his mark on the US Super League Rugby season by leading the points scoring after three rounds.

The couple have also been visiting California's famous tourist attractions and travelling to other cities in America.

COURTESY: THE PLAYERS

vibe.com.au

Deadly Vibe April 2009 | 9





Activity 1

Understanding what you read

Read *Greetings from Venice Beach, California* on page 9.

Shade one bubble.

1. Mayrah and Matt have just moved to

- Redfern, Sydney.
- Los Angeles, California.
- Las Vegas.
- New York.

2. Mayrah says that Los Angeles was overwhelming at first. By this, she means

- everything was very different to what she was used to.
- it was fun.
- she loved the Starbucks coffee.
- there were a lot of surfers there.

3. According to the text, what is one thing Matt does when he's not playing rugby?

- He cooks Sunday dinner for his new friends.
- He is a role model for the Inner City Education Foundation.
- He plays basketball.
- He goes rollerblading.

4. Travelling has certainly proved to us that we are fortunate to live in Australia.

This suggests that

- Mayrah and Matt are sick of living in America.
- they like living in Australia.
- their time in America has made them appreciate Australia even more.
- Mayrah and Matt like to keep in touch with friends.

5. What is the main purpose of this text?

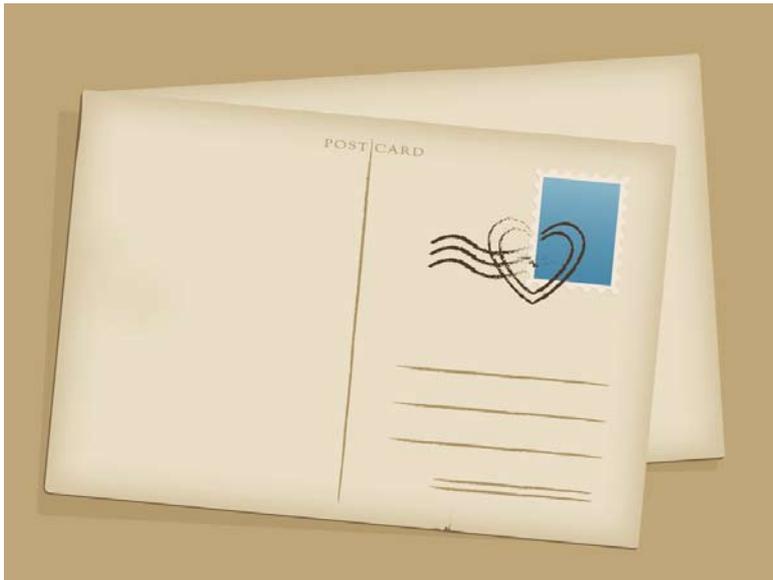
- to warn
- to argue
- to inform
- to criticise



Activity 4

Writing a postcard

Mayrah wrote about her experiences of living in Los Angeles, California.
Write a postcard to describe your favourite trip.



Activity 5

Writing a narrative

The common features of a narrative often include:

Beginning/Orientation: This sets the scene, creating a visual picture of the setting, atmosphere and time of the story. Characters are introduced and clues are set in place for the coming complication.

Problem/Complication: This is where a problem or complication occurs that affects the setting, time or characters.

Character's Reaction: Characters are developed through the ways they react to the problem.

Problem seems to be resolved/Minor Resolution: Everything seems to be resolved.

New Problem/Complication: The problem or complication is now often worse than before.

Problem is solved/Ending/Resolution: The problem is solved and the story ends.

Moral/Coda/Evaluative ending: There may be a moral or message at the end of the story.

VIBE SCHOOL

Issue 146
Years 7-8

Write a narrative.

The idea for your story is FOUND.



Your story might be about finding a lost pet, hidden treasures or new friends.

It could be about finding the solution to a problem or finding an opportunity to do something different and exciting.

Your story could be about how people in difficult situations find courage, help or understanding.

Think about:

- The characters and where they are.
- The complication or problem to be solved.
- How the story will end.

Remember to:

- Plan your story before you start.
- Write in sentences.
- Pay attention to the words you choose, your spelling and punctuation.
- Check and edit your writing when you have finished.