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**Stuart Beal**

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## Stuart Beal

Stuart Beal is a mildly annoying and highly energetic incoming sophomore at Nacogdoches High School. He enjoys (sometimes) swimming on the high school swim team and the Ambush club team and is a trumpet in the Nacogdoches Golden Dragon Band. He is also on the debate team (what a great time we live in for policy debate, am I right?!?!) and plays piano (frick Haydn). He is highly aware at the moment that his mom is going to be reading this in front of a live audience so he decided to include this: fuck donald.

## An Open Letter to Red Hats

Dear red hats,

I would like to start this letter by first stating that I am addressing only a small subsection of the community of red hats in this letter. I'm not addressing the red hats at Claire's that are bejeweled with hearts and rainbows. No, I have no beef with you all, you do great work, truly. You make nine-year-old girls very happy. I appreciate you. This letter is for the red hats that sit upon heads filled to the brim with Hillary Clinton conspiracy theories, plans to attend gun shows, and arguments about whether or not you should buy that trailer your second cousin's wife's sister's mom (who happens to also be your daughter) just put on sale in that Neo-Nazi Facebook group you just joined. This letter is for the red hats that rest upon minds that are absolutely fixated on the fact that Obama wasn't born in America. The minds that somehow chalk up their own economic misfortune to a secretary of state using a personal email. This is for you.

I want to start off with some questions. What are your political beliefs? Do you take after the people that buy and wear you? Or do you hate that a motto as ridiculous and regressive as "Make America Great Again" has been stitched into your skin. Do you realize how ironic it is that that white piece of cloth towards your rear end is printed with the words MADE IN CHINA, while the candidate you're created to endorse won't shut up about how we need to bring back industry to American soil? Maybe I'm overestimating your intellectual capacity, but I just can't get past this. Have you ever noticed how infrequently one of your kind is placed upon a head of someone that's not white, old, and scary looking? Doesn't that give you pause? Whatever, moving on.

Are you aware that you've become such a symbol for hatred? Do you see the looks that you get when the people that are wearing you go anywhere outside of their usual realm of truck stops, evangelical churches, and trailer parks? Do you feel in any way responsible for this hatred? Again, I'm probably overestimating your ability to think, but I'm gonna end by asking you to try and complete a task for me. Next time you're being worn, try to talk to the person that's wearing you. Chances are, the reason they have chose to don such a horrible accessory, no offense, is because they're angry, and rightfully so. Try to talk them down a bit. Maybe even convince them to turn the channel from Fox News to literally any other source. BuzzFeed would do better for our society at this point. If you're successful, they might just realize that the raging lunatic often depicted as a Cheeto that somehow found its way into a wig (and the white house) is doing everything in his power to support the economic system that has made it so hard for them to make ends meet. If you work at it long and hard enough, you just might get your owner

to get rid of you. Hopefully, after reading this letter, you understand that this is a goal worth working towards.

I'm not sure how eagerly you are going to work towards your own demise, but I hope you're self-aware enough to know it's for the best.

XOXO- A Liberal Snowflake

### **Writing Activity**

1. Symbols are commonly used to identify a group within its members and to those "outside" the group --- mascots are used for sports teams, school uniforms adhere to the school colors, and rainbows are often associated with LGBTQIA pride. Pick a symbol in your life and give it personification, as Stuart did in his "An Open Letter to Red Hats." Talk to the symbol and make it aware of what it stands for --- good or bad.
2. Why do we write letters? To communicate a complaint to a company, to express love to a crush, to offer thanks for a gift. Who in your life needs a letter? Write a letter --- to someone specific about something specific. Or write an "open letter" (like Stuart did) to a group of people that you don't even know but need to talk to.