

Activities for Developing a Literacy-Rich Environment

Post Office

Sending and receiving mail are exciting events for almost all children.

Through this activity, children will:

- have an opportunity to learn about how a post office works
- be motivated to write, draw and read “mail”
- increase their understanding of the purpose of print.

Directions: Find a suitable location in your classroom for location of a post office. This area can be large—or very small, depending upon space. The best place will be adjacent to the writing center—so that those supplies will be readily available. If room does permit, a large cardboard box can be cut and used as a “window” at the post office. A puppet theatre or play store works well for this, too. The following is a list of materials you’ll want to collect for use in this center.

- Individual mailboxes for each child—shoe organizers work well for this, as do shoeboxes taped together with duct tape. Place each child’s name on a mailbox, with his/her picture.
- In addition to the typical supplies found in the writing center, you’ll want to stock up on envelope, postcard-sized paper or index cards, old greeting cards, junk mail, cancelled postage stamps or pretend ones, stamp pad, date stamp or other stamp for use in canceling the postage stamps. You might also include mail order catalogs.
- Locate a canvas bag to use as a mailbag. Fabric paint can be used to paint **U.S. Mail** on the outside of the bag.
- Decorate cardboard boxes to look like mailboxes. Place these within easy reach of children. Be sure to have a list of children’s names and photos close by the writing area for use in addressing letters, cards, and envelopes.
- Invite children to write to you, to each other, and to family members. Include a note in your parent newsletter about the classroom post office, encouraging family members to bring in “mail” for their children.