

# Snail Mail Postcard

**Background:** We have been discussing written communication. There are many ways to keep in contact with your family and friends. We can write letters, send e-mail and text messages, and use social media. Now it is your turn to have fun with writing to a friend.

**Design Challenge:** Design and create a postcard for your friend. Write a note on your postcard that shares news about one special event that happened during your week.

**Criteria:** Your postcard must

- have a height of at least 6.5 inches and a length of less than 9.5 inches
- include a picture of a special event labeled with the title of the event
- contain one lever-operated moving part
- include a message for your friend written in complete sentences
- be formatted with a greeting, closing, signature, and date
- be edited for grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.



| <b>Materials:</b> Select from the list below.   | <b>Tools:</b> Select from the list below.  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• construction paper</li><li>• glue</li><li>• index cards</li><li>• paper, lined for writing</li><li>• paper fasteners</li><li>• scrap paper</li><li>• tape (limit 12 inches)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hole punch</li><li>• pencil</li><li>• pushpin paper drill</li><li>• ruler</li><li>• scissors</li></ul> |

**Targeted Standard of Learning:** English 3.9  
Supporting SOL: English 3.1, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 3.10; Mathematics 3.9

**Targeted Standards for Technological Literacy:** 11, 17  
Supporting STL: 8, 9, 10

## Tips for Teachers

### Targeted Standard of Learning:

- English 3.9 The student will write for a variety of purposes.
- Identify the intended audience.
  - Use a variety of prewriting strategies.
  - Write a clear topic sentence focusing on the main idea.
  - Write a paragraph on the same topic.
  - Use strategies for organization of information and elaboration according to the type of writing.
  - Include details that elaborate the main idea.
  - Revise writing for clarity of content, using specific vocabulary and information.

**Supporting SOL:** English 3.1, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 3.10; Mathematics 3.9

### Targeted Standards for Technological Literacy:

- 11 Students will develop the abilities to apply the design process.  
17 Students will develop an understanding of and be able to select and use information and communication technologies.

**Supporting STL:** 8, 9, 10

## Tips for Teachers, continued

| Prior Knowledge & Skill   | Materials & Preparation   | Safety Issues  | Class Management  | Materials Provided  | Design Process   |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposure to letter writing through literature</li> <li>• Exposure to writing strategies</li> <li>• Exposure to editing own work</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check Design Brief for recommended materials. Teacher may substitute materials.</li> <li>• Sample books with writing/ correspondence as a theme*</li> </ul> <p><b>*Sample Books:</b><br/> <i>Dear Mrs. LaRue, Letters from Obedience School</i> by Mark Teaque<br/> <i>The Gardener</i> by Sarah Stewart<br/> <i>Postcards from Pluto</i> by L. Leedy<br/> <i>The Jolly Postman</i> by Janet Ahlberg<br/> <i>Postcards from Camp</i> by Simms Taback<br/> <i>Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea</i> by Vera Williams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative size criteria: The postcard must have a perimeter between 32 and 44 inches.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss proper use of tools.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual projects</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design Brief</li> <li>• Guided Portfolio (adapt as appropriate/ optional)</li> <li>• Rubric Assessments</li> </ul> | <p>Follow the Design Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restate the problem.</li> <li>• Brainstorm solutions.</li> <li>• Create the best solution.</li> <li>• Test the solution.</li> <li>• Evaluate the solution.</li> </ul> |



Guided Portfolio, p2

Name \_\_\_\_\_



**2. Brainstorm solutions.** Sketch and/or describe some possible solutions.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Test your solution.**

Does your postcard have a height of at least 6.5 inches and a length less than 9.5 inches? YES NO

- The postcard has a height of \_\_\_\_\_ inches.
- The postcard has a width of \_\_\_\_\_ inches.
- Be prepared to demonstrate how you decided on the size of your postcard.

Does your postcard include a picture of a special event labeled with the title of the event? YES NO

- Describe your picture and what it illustrates about the event.
- Identify your title and explain why you chose it.

Does your postcard have a lever-operated moving part? YES NO

- Identify it and explain how it works.

Does your postcard include a message for your friend written in complete sentences? YES NO

- Be prepared to share your message.

Is your postcard formatted with a greeting, closing, signature and date? YES NO

- What greeting did you put on your postcard? \_\_\_\_\_
- What closing did you use? \_\_\_\_\_
- What date did you use? \_\_\_\_\_
- How did you sign your card? \_\_\_\_\_

Was your postcard edited for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling? YES NO

Guided Portfolio, p5

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Evaluate your solution.**

Was it the best solution? Why, or why not?

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Look back at your brainstorming page. Would one of your other ideas have worked better? Why, or why not?

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What did you learn about communicating with postcards by designing and creating your own?

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## Rubric for Snail Mail Postcard

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

0—no evidence; 1—limited understanding; 2—some understanding with room for improvement; 3—good understanding with room for improvement; 4—substantial understanding

| <b>Design Brief Rubric</b>   | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| The student restated the problem in his/her own words.   |          |          |          |          |          |
| The student brainstormed more than one idea.   |          |          |          |          |          |
| The student shared problems that occurred and their solutions through written notes or oral communication per teacher's instructions.  |          |          |          |          |          |
| The student tested the postcard to make sure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it has a height of at least 6.5 inches and a length of less than 9.5 inches</li> <li>• it includes a picture of a special event labeled with the title of the event</li> <li>• it has a lever-operated moving part</li> <li>• it has a message for a friend written in complete sentences</li> <li>• it is formatted with a date, greeting, closing, and signature</li> <li>• it was edited for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.</li> </ul> |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |          |          |          |          |          |
| The student evaluated how he/she could make it better next time.   |          |          |          |          |          |

## Rubric for Snail Mail Postcard

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

0—no evidence; 1—limited understanding; 2—some understanding with room for improvement; 3—good understanding with room for improvement; 4—substantial understanding

| <b>Oral Communication Rubric</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>3.1</b> The student will use effective communication skills in group activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Listen attentively by making eye contact, facing the speaker, asking questions, and summarizing what is said.</li> <li>b) Ask and respond to questions from teachers and other group members.</li> <li>c) Explain what has been learned.</li> <li>d) Use language appropriate for context.</li> <li>e) Increase listening and speaking vocabularies.</li> </ul> |          |          |          |          |          |
| <b>3.2</b> The student will present brief oral reports using visual media. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Speak clearly.</li> <li>b) Use appropriate volume and pitch.</li> <li>c) Speak at an understandable rate.</li> <li>d) Organize ideas sequentially or around major points of information.</li> <li>e) Use contextually appropriate language and specific vocabulary to communicate ideas.</li> </ul>  |          |          |          |          |          |

## Standards of Learning

### English (2010)

#### *Oral Language*

- 3.1 The student will use effective communication skills in group activities.
- a) Listen attentively by making eye contact, facing the speaker, asking questions, and summarizing what is said.
  - b) Ask and respond to questions from teachers and other group members.
  - c) Explain what has been learned.
  - d) Use language appropriate for context.
  - e) Increase listening and speaking vocabularies.
- 3.2 The student will present brief oral reports using visual media.
- a) Speak clearly.
  - b) Use appropriate volume and pitch.
  - c) Speak at an understandable rate.
  - d) Organize ideas sequentially or around major points of information.
  - e) Use contextually appropriate language and specific vocabulary to communicate ideas.

#### *Reading*

- 3.6 The student will continue to read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.
- a) Identify the author's purpose.
  - b) Use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning.
  - c) Preview and use text features.
  - d) Ask and answer questions about what is read.
  - e) Draw conclusions based on text.
  - f) Summarize major points found in nonfiction texts.
  - g) Identify the main idea.
  - h) Identify supporting details.
  - i) Compare and contrast the characteristics of biographies and autobiographies.
  - j) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.
  - k) Identify new information gained from reading.
  - l) Read with fluency and accuracy.

- 3.7 The student will demonstrate comprehension of information from a variety of print and electronic resources.
- a) Use encyclopedias and other reference books, including online reference materials.
  - b) Use table of contents, indices, and charts.

### *Writing*

- 3.9 The student will write for a variety of purposes.
- a) Identify the intended audience.
  - b) Use a variety of prewriting strategies.
  - c) Write a clear topic sentence focusing on the main idea.
  - d) Write a paragraph on the same topic.
  - e) Use strategies for organization of information and elaboration according to the type of writing.
  - f) Include details that elaborate the main idea.
  - g) Revise writing for clarity of content, using specific vocabulary and information.
- 3.10 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- a) Use complete sentences.
  - b) Use transition words to vary sentence structure.
  - c) Use the word I in compound subjects.
  - d) Use past and present verb tense.
  - e) Use singular possessives.
  - f) Use commas in a simple series.
  - g) Use simple abbreviations.
  - h) Use apostrophes in contractions with pronouns and in possessives.
  - i) Use the articles a, an, and the correctly.
  - j) Use correct spelling for frequently used sight words, including irregular plurals.

## **Mathematics** (2009)

### *Measurement*

- 3.9 The student will estimate and use U.S. Customary and metric units to measure
- a) length to the nearest 1/2-inch, inch, foot, yard, centimeter, and meter;
  - b) liquid volume in cups, pints, quarts, gallons, and liters;
  - c) weight/mass in ounces, pounds, grams, and kilograms; and
  - d) area and perimeter.

## **Standards for Technological Literacy**

Standard 8: Students will develop an understanding of the attributes of design.

Standard 9: Students will develop an understanding of engineering design.

Standard 10: Students will develop an understanding of the role of troubleshooting, research and development, invention and innovation, and experimentation in problem solving.

Standard 11: Students will develop the abilities to apply the design process.

Standard 17: Students will develop an understanding of and be able to select and use information and communication technologies.

## Please give us some feedback.

Complete the form below to let us know how this design brief worked for you and your students. Please be specific so that we might use your suggestions to improve the activity. *You can fill this out on your computer, or you can print it, fill it out manually, and scan it.*

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School division: \_\_\_\_\_

Design brief title: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Background</b>  | <i>Put an X in the appropriate column:</i> | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use |
|--|--|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Does it set the context for the activity?  |  |                       |                        |                            |
| Is it age-appropriate in language, length, and complexity?   |  |                       |                        |                            |
| Does it reference prior learning and/or research that the students did that will facilitate designing a solution to a problem?   |  |                       |                        |                            |
| Is it detailed enough that an adult will understand the purpose for the design brief?  |  |                       |                        |                            |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i> |  |                       |                        |                            |

| <b>Design Challenge</b>  | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Does the challenge support your curriculum?  |                       |                        |                            |
| Is it age-appropriate in language, length, and complexity?   |                       |                        |                            |
| Is it detailed enough that an adult will understand the purpose for the design brief?  |                       |                        |                            |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i> |                       |                        |                            |

| <b>Criteria</b><br>Criteria are part of the challenge. They set the limitations for the design. They are not directions.         | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use | N/A |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----|
| Are the limitations age-appropriate?   |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Do the limitations encourage critical thinking?  |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Is the application of mathematic knowledge/skills integrated into the criteria? If not, should the skill area be addressed?      |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Is the application of science knowledge/skills integrated into the criteria? If not, should the skill area be addressed?         |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Is the application of social studies knowledge/skills integrated into the criteria? If not, should the skill area be addressed?  |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Are language skills integrated into the criteria? If not, should the skill area be addressed?                                    |                       |                        |                            |     |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i> |                       |                        |                            |     |

|  |                       |                        |                            |     |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----|
| <b>Materials</b><br>Materials help set the limitations for the design. The list should include materials that might work.        | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use | N/A |
| Does the materials list encourage a variety of design solutions?   |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Does the materials list include a variety of choices for joining items?  |                       |                        |                            |     |
| Does the materials list include materials that force students to make decisions?   |                       |                        |                            |     |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i> |                       |                        |                            |     |

|   |                       |                        |                            |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Tools</b><br>Tools can be used in the construction of the designed product. They are used to manipulate materials. They cannot become part of the product. | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use |
| Are the tools listed age appropriate?   |                       |                        |                            |
| Are all tools needed for the activity included?   |                       |                        |                            |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i>                              |                       |                        |                            |

| <b>Standards of Learning</b>  | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Does the design brief reinforce the targeted Standard of Learning(s)? |     |    |
| Are the supporting Standards of Learning appropriate?                 |     |    |
| What Standards of Learning would you add or remove?                   |     |    |

| <b>Standards for Technological Literacy</b>  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Does the design brief reinforce the targeted Standard(s) for Technological Literacy? |     |    |
| Are the supporting Standards for Technological Literacy appropriate?                 |     |    |
| What Standards for Technological Literacy would you add or remove?                   |     |    |

| <b>Tips for Teachers</b>   | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Are the tips listed in the chart helpful for a first-time teacher? |     |    |
| What tips would you add?   |     |    |

| <b>Guided Portfolio</b>  | Needs to be rewritten | Needs minor adjustment | Is ready for classroom use |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Are the instructions and questions age appropriate and clear?  |                       |                        |                            |
| In the "Test your solution" section, do the questions force students to thoroughly test their solutions?                         |                       |                        |                            |
| In the "Evaluate your solution" section, do the questions force students to honestly evaluate their solutions                    |                       |                        |                            |
| COMMENTS. <i>If any of the questions above are marked other than "ready for classroom use," please provide suggestions here.</i> |                       |                        |                            |

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Additional Comments</b><br/>Please use this area to provide general suggestions for improving this design brief.</p> |
| <br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>   |