

**UNIT: SOCIAL INTERACTION LESSON: School Post Office & Friendly Letters GRADES(s): K-3**

**Conceptual Theme:** Relationship to broader curriculum goals in the discipline & in other disciplines? (*Component 1c*)

People communicate with the written word for a variety of purposes – share, persuade, inform etc. Letter writing is one means of communication used to share feelings and information with friends and family. Since ancient times, personal letters have been a key medium for establishing and cultivating interpersonal relationships (1. L. Kauffman, 1986). As early as the 16th century, scholars made personal letter writing an object of formal study. (2. Goldsmith, 1989). The content of letters written by the “common man” as well as by famous historical figures, are a valuable sources of historical information.

In this unit we will:

- Kick-Off School Post Office by learning about US Postal Service and how “Mail Moves”,
- Use literature and shared writing to teach friendly letter-writing. Students listen to and talk about stories dealing with letter-writing.
- Students will participate in a directed letter-writing activity to learn the parts of a friendly letter and proper addressing of an envelope.
- Letter writing will be on-going via the Grandview Elementary School Post Office.
- Students will write letters and include them in a “Care” package to the “children of Hurricane Katrina”

[\(Concept Map: My World - Social Interaction / Community & Global Connections\)](#)

**NYS Standards:** How do these goals support the district’s curriculum, state framework, and content standards? (*Comp. 1a & 1c*)

Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction

Students will listen, speak, read, and write for social interaction. Students will use oral and written language that follows the accepted conventions of the English language for effective social communication with a wide variety of people. As readers and listeners, they will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

S4\_2: Written communication for social interaction requires using written messages to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships with others. (Extension: Letters to “Children of Katrina”)

Students:

S4\_2\_1: exchange friendly notes, cards, and letters with friends, relatives, and pen pals to keep in touch and to commemorate special occasions

S4\_2\_2: adjust their vocabulary and style to take into account the nature of the relationship and the knowledge and interests of the person receiving the message

S4\_2\_3: read and discuss published letters, diaries, and journals to learn the conventions of social writing.

This is evident, for example, when students:

- write thank you notes and invitations to friends
- exchange letters with pen pals in another country
- write letters to relatives who live in another city.

What are the goals for the lesson? What do you want the students to learn? (*Component 1c*)

Why are these goals suitable for his group of students? (*Component 1c*)

Essential Understandings	Essential Questions	Knowledge & Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter writing is one means of communication used to share feelings and information with friends and family.</li> <li>• The US Postal Service plays a vital role in the movement of physical mail. (Relationship of US Postal to Email, Fedx etc. as well as early movers – pony express...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do people write friendly letters?</li> <li>• What is the proper format for a friendly letter?</li> <li>• How should I address my letter to ensure that it moves through the post office from sender to receiver?</li> <li>• In the age of email and “IM” – why send a letter.</li> <li>• What can we learn about history through the study of letters?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how the postal system processes and moves the mail.</li> <li>• Write a friendly letter with a proper heading, salutation, body, closing, and signature.</li> <li>• Address an envelope: Recipient and Return Address.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Resources:</b> What instruction materials or other resources, if any, will you use? (<i>Component 1d</i>)</p> <p><b>Streaming Video:</b>  <a href="#">Delivering the Mail: Postal Employees at Work</a> - United Streaming</p> <p><b>Handouts:</b> (White Board Word Documents used to demonstrate)  <a href="#">Friendly Letter Template</a>  <a href="#">Envelope Template</a></p> <p><b>Books:</b>  <i>The Jolly Postman (1-2)</i> – Scanned and shown as Powerpoint with voice -- may be viewed by on computers T-Share  <i>Boxes for Katje (2-3)</i> – CD Created for individual listening – on T-Share as well.  <i>Red-Letter Day (2-3) Follow-up to Streaming Video</i> – CD Created for individual listening – on T-Share as well.</p>
<p><b>Preparation:</b>  What instructional materials or other resources, if any, will you use? (<i>Component 1d</i>)  What difficulties do students typically experience in this area, and how do you plan to anticipate these difficulties? (<i>Component 1a</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ White Board Word Documents for Friendly Letter &amp; Envelope used to demonstrate</li> <li>▪ “Mailboxes” for Teachers</li> <li>▪ Stamps / Postcards / Friendly Letter Templates / Envelopes</li> <li>▪ Mail Bags (3)</li> <li>▪ Select Postmaster General / Mail Sorters / Mail Carriers</li> <li>▪ Post Job Chart &amp; Times – Move Mailbox to Hallway outside of Library</li> <li>▪ Bulletin Board – Letter / Envelope / Sample Student Work</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teaching and Learning Experiences:</b> (Instruction, Performance Tasks, Projects, Academic Prompts to evaluate understanding.)  How do you plan to engage students in the content? What will you do? What will students do? (Time estimates) (<i>Component 1c</i>)</p> <p><b>Hook - Engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running a school post office out of the Grandview Library – share post box, stamps, mail bags – talk about role children will play in managing and delivering the mail.</li> <li>• Letters to “Children of Katrina”</li> <li>• Share “Moving the Mail” – United Streaming Video on process of writing and sending a letter through the US Postal Service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Where We Are Going:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will read books about letter writing ....</li> <li>• We will practice writing a letter and addressing an envelope in the library ... send it through the Grandview Post Office to a friend in the same or different class. Post Office will be open for business throughout the year.</li> <li>• Postal workers will be selected to sort and deliver the mail – workers will change every 2 months.</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Experiences – Group and Individual:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ View the United Streaming Video: Moving the mail and discuss the steps... what can go wrong?</li> <li>▪ Listen to books about writing letters and discuss.</li> <li>▪ Have students write friendly letter to a friend in his own class or in another class in the school.</li> <li>▪ Assign students to roles of Post Master, Sorter, Mail Carrier – Possibly write essay as to why you would like the job.</li> </ul> <p><b>For Younger Students (K) &amp; Social Communications Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Letter Writing Template with “Picture Frames” – Cartoon-Strip</li> <li>▪ Full size sheets with wide line spacing for those who can write.</li> </ul> <p><b>Extensions:</b> 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders will write letters to “Children of Katrina” and send a “Caring Box”</p>

Kauffman, L. (1986). *Discourses of desire: Gender, genre, and epistolary fictions*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Goldsmith, E. C. (1989). Authority, authenticity, and the publication of letters by women. In E. C. Goldsmith (Ed.), *Writing the female voice: Essays on epistolary literature* (pp. 46–59). Boston: Northeastern University Press

Framework for Teaching 4 Domains: <http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/FrameWorkForTeaching/FourDomainsChart.pdf>  
National Association of School Psychologists – <http://www.grandviewlibrary.org/CurriculumAdaptations/NineTypes.pdf>