



E-MAIL, SNAIL MAIL

(30-40 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students send letters, postcards, and/or e-mails to an elected official.

MATERIALS

Paper or cardstock; writing implements: pens, pencils

GET READY

- ✓ Students can write letters or prepare “postcards.” To create postcards, cut sheets of cardstock in half on a paper cutter.
- ✓ Gather pens and/or pencils.
- ✓ If your school has e-mail capability in your classroom, through a technology classroom or media center, schedule your class there during the week you would like to compose the letters. E-mail is a great alternative to paper mail.
- ✓ If your PTA has a special budget for the Kids Voting USA program, you might buy a postcard stamp for each student. If not, the students can deliver or mail the postcards personally.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Say, *There are lots of people who work for us in our country: our mayor, our senators, our representatives, our president, etc. It is important that they understand how we feel about the job they are doing as well as what is important to us.*
- ✓ Ask your students to think about something they would like to share with an elected official. Have the mailing addresses/e-mail addresses of various elected officials available for your students.

- ✓ Tell your students to compose a letter to the official and sign it. They should use the proper letter format. Tell them to write the address of the person they are contacting on the envelope as well as their return address. Alternatively, make your visit to the technology classroom or the media center, if your classroom is not equipped with the Internet. Ask the technology or media specialist, if there is one, to explain what e-mail is and how it works. Students can always send messages electronically as well as by “snail mail.”
- ✓ Explain the term “snail mail” — the post office is as slow as a snail, compared with the speed of e-mail.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Why is it important that we share our opinions with our elected officials?*
- ★ *What are other ways we can contact our elected officials?*
- ★ *How can we encourage other students to write their elected officials?*
- ★ *What can we say to people who tell us “You are not making a difference?”*

MORE!

Write letters to other prominent persons, such as judges and the state and national secretaries of education.