



Writing Lesson: Vacation Postcard

Subject: Reading and Writing

Grade Level: K-5 (ages 5-11)

Time: 50 minutes

Lesson Objective:

Students will create a clear and coherent “postcard” from an imaginary vacation.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts¹

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing:

- Standard 4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Standard 5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Standard 6.** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:

Children develop as writers as they do as readers, in stages. This Kidspiration® activity allows children, no matter what their developmental stage of writing, to develop a writing project of their choice. This activity encourages students to attend to word choice, audience, voice, ideas and conventions while allowing students to be creative in their final design and copy.

Preparation:

This lesson requires the Kidspiration software application published by Inspiration Software, Inc. 30-day trials can be downloaded at <<http://www.inspiration.com/kidspiration>>.

Lesson:

1. Open *Vacation Postcard Exemplar.kid* and explain to students that they will be designing a postcard. Read the instructions aloud.

Vacation Postcard: Wish You Were Here

1. Create a postcard. Using symbols from the Library, design a graphic for the front of the postcard. The place may be real or fictional. Write a caption or phrase on the front of the postcard.
2. Next address the postcard to someone on the message side of the postcard.
3. Type a message to a friend. Share information about the place you visited.

Postcard Graphic	Message
<p style="text-align: center;">The California beaches, come for the sun, stay for the fun!</p> 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><p>Dear Lauren, We are having so much fun on vacation. The beach is a giant playground! I learned how to windsurf. It's almost like skateboarding, but you get wet! I'll tell you all about it when school starts. Your friend, Erin</p></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; float: right;"><p>Lauren Korth R.R 2 Humphrey, NE 68793</p></div>



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Note: Prior to this lesson, the teacher may wish to have students bring in examples of postcards for discussion. Using **Picture View**, brainstorm and record the types of postcards, their purposes, designs, and intended audiences and note observations related to word choice. Discuss how these aspects relate to the postcard in the template.

2. Consider defining project guidelines:
 - a) Should the location featured on the postcard be real or fictional?
 - b) Should the intended audience be real or fictional?
 - c) What is the purpose of the postcard?
 - d) Should students brainstorm ideas prior to designing their postcard?
3. Open *Vacation Postcard.kia* from **Kidspiration Starter>Activities>Reading and Writing**. Following the project guidelines in step 2 (above), model completing the activity.

Vacation Postcard: Wish You Were Here

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Postcard Graphic	Message
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 5px;">Type message here</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-left: 20px;">Type mailing address here</div>

4. Demonstrate how to use the **Word Guide** to clarify and enhance word choice.
5. Utilizing the writing process, model for students how to edit and proofread the postcard.



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Assessment:

- You may wish to incorporate writing rubrics used in your classroom or search <http://www.readwritethink.org> for a grade appropriate writing rubric.
- Confirm that students followed the established project guidelines previously determined.

Adaptations / Extensions:

- Have students design several postcards using the same location but varying the audience, e.g., written to a travel agent, to a young child, etc.
- Have students design a postcard enticing someone to vacation where no one would want to visit, e.g., a landfill, an alley, etc.
- Have students design the postcard in conjunction with another project, i.e. report on a state or foreign country.
- Have students design a postcard for a specific time in history or civilization, e.g., Colonial America, Ancient Rome, etc.

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