

STATE POSTCARD



Time: 3–4 class periods

Instructional Goals:

- The student will use the PebbleGo Next State Studies and American Indian History online database to research and take notes on a U.S. state.
- The student will navigate an online database to locate needed information.
- The student will use his/her research notes to write a postcard letter as if they are visiting the state. The postcard will incorporate facts about the state into the student's narrative.

Materials/Resources:

- PebbleGo Next online database
- Picture book told in postcard and/or letters (search "postcards, fiction" in your library's online catalog for appropriate titles)
- Example postcard
- Note-taking graphic organizer, such as State Postcard Research Notes
- State Postcard template, a postcard app (available online or in an applicable app store), or cardstock cut to postcard size

Procedures/Lesson Activities:

Focus

1. Read a picture book told through postcards and/or letters. Discuss with the students how the story was told through postcards.
2. Ask students if they have received a postcard in the mail before. If so, ask about the postcard: Who sent it? Where did it come from? What type of picture was on it? What did you learn about the place it was sent from?

Teach/Model

3. Show students a postcard you have either written to the class on your last trip or that you have received from someone on a trip. Point out how a reader can tell who sent it, where it came from, and interesting information about that place that can be learned from the picture and/or the letter portion of the postcard.

Guided Practice



4. Tell students that they will be writing postcards to each other. Explain that each student will pretend they are visiting one of the states in the United States, and they will write their postcard as if they are actually there.
5. Brainstorm as a class the types of information they will need to know about their state in order to write their postcard as if they are actually there. Ideas may include cities, landmarks, landforms, and weather.
6. Using your home state as an example, model researching the categories brainstormed. Demonstrate taking notes and citing your source. Show students how you can use the information in your notes to write a postcard.

Independent Practice

7. Students research their state, using PebbleGo Next.
8. Have students take notes on the categories brainstormed during Guided Practice, making sure to cite their source as they work. Students may record their information using a note-taking graphic organizer, such as the State Postcard Research Notes handout.
9. Students write their postcard letter. They may create their postcard using the State Postcard template, a postcard app, or cardstock cut to postcard size. Students may draw or paste a picture representing their state on the front of the postcard.

Closure

10. Ask students to address their postcards to the class. You may have them “mail” the postcard through a class mailbox. Read the postcards, either individually or as a class. Discuss what the reader can learn about the state from the postcard’s letter and picture.

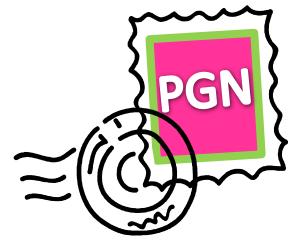
Extend/Enrich

11. Display the postcards on a large map of the United States for others to read and enjoy.
12. Play a class game by reading postcard letters aloud and have students make educated guesses as to the location each postcard was sent from. Award points for correct answers.

(Draw or glue state picture below.)
(Fold here and glue blank sides together.)

Dear _____,

From _____



To:

State Postcard Research Notes



State: _____ Name _____

General Information

This state was the _____ state of the United States.
(ordinal number)

Statehood (When did it become a state?) _____

Location in the U.S. _____

State Symbols

Flag—Print the state's flag. Staple it to your notes.

List at least 3 state symbols.

Geography Landforms (for example, mountains, rivers, beaches, prairies)

Climate (What is the weather usually like?)

History

Write at least one interesting historical fact about this state.

People

Population _____

Famous Person from State (Tell why this person is famous.)

Cities

Capital city _____

Other major city _____

Landmarks and other interesting things to see and do

Bibliography

Brainstorming—After Completing Your Notes

Pretend you are visiting the state. Use your notes to answer these questions to help you brainstorm ideas for your postcard letter.

Where would you go while you are visiting this state?

What activities would you do while visiting the state?

What landforms or attractions would you see while you are there?

What is the coolest thing you learned about this state?
