



Topics: Solar System,
Language Arts, Art

Materials List

- ✓ Matte Board or index cards
- ✓ Colored pencils and/or markers
- ✓ Writing pens
- ✓ List of objects in the Solar System to be cut apart and distributed randomly to the students (copy enough so that each student will be able to choose 3 space objects)

This activity can be used to teach:
English Language Arts Standards:

- Write narratives; Informative texts; write w/organization (Writing, Grades 3-8, 1, 2, 3; Grades 6-8, Science/technical writing, 2)
- Write discipline-specific content (Grades 6-8, Sci./tech. writing, 1)

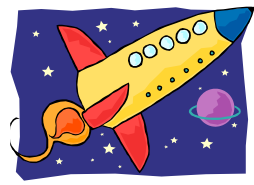
Next Generation Science Standards:

- Scale of objects in the Solar system (Middle School, Earth and Space Science 1-3),



Postcards From Space

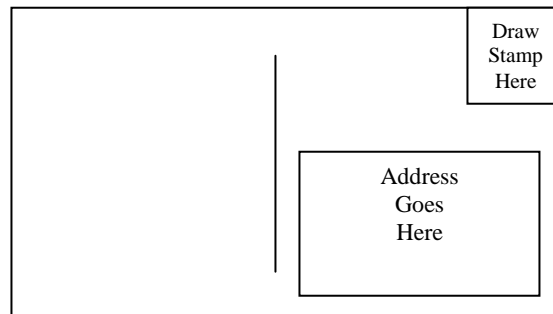
An interdisciplinary assessment



In this interdisciplinary activity, students choose an object in the Solar System to “visit” then send a postcard to a loved one describing their adventure (via “interplanetary post”). Postcards From Space combines science knowledge (astronomy), art, and writing skills.

To Do and Notice

1. Distribute the materials and explain to the students that people often send postcards when they go on a vacation. In this “test”, they will pretend that they are taking a “vacation” to an object in the Solar System, and they will write a letter to someone on Earth, sharing the sites they have seen and relaying their adventures.
2. Students may need reminding of the procedure for addressing postcards:



3. Have students randomly choose 3 “objects from space.” From those three, students can pick the planet or other Solar System object or region to “visit” as their postcard subject.

Grading the Postcards

Students should use grade level appropriate written English Language conventions as outlined in the California standards. Encourage creativity and originality, but also scientific accuracy and detail. Students should show science knowledge by describing features of their space destination, such as its location in the Solar System, facts about the object (like its size), or descriptions of geographic features (like the giant Red Spot on Jupiter). Students can also project into the future, perhaps describing the hypothetical “Martian Colony” that will be built in 2040 a.d. The Image that students draw on the picture-side of the postcard should be accurate in some way, showing correct color or location.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=329 for more resources!)

An Excellent, comprehensive source of information on the Solar System is available at: www.jpl.nasa.gov/solar_system/index.cfm