

Just a Note ...

Just a Note... encourages children to use everyday literacies in the classroom. Teachers ensure that papers, cards, pens, pencils and markers are available. In writing and activity times children can choose to email, word process or draw and write notes, messages, cards and phone numbers to others. Teachers model replies and encourage recipients to reply.

Why use Just a Note...?

Just a note...creates opportunities for children to:

- ❖ copy and participate in perceived 'adult' writing of everyday life
- ❖ communicate and make meaning with others
- ❖ write on 'real' paper and cards and post them in the mail
- ❖ communicate by email

Steps

1. Provide writing materials such as papers, cards, pens, pencils and markers (p. 81).
2. Teach the children to use class email and to word process on computers.
3. Encourage written communication in everyday classroom life through reminders, messages, lists, notes and cards.
4. Help the children make a post box for their in-class mail.
5. Include drawing, writing, word-processing and emailing in choosing times (p. 45).
6. Sometimes, provide decorative stationary for the children to use.
7. Encourage recipients to reply when classmates write.
8. Respond to children's letters and notes, using stationary, envelopes, attractive paper or email replies.
9. Facilitate the process for children to email and post letters to 'real people' such as grandparents, a buddy class or the school principal.

Extensions

Writing in choosing times

Encourage children to write in activity or choosing times by providing enticing writing materials (p. 81). Communications may include notes, letters, cards and messages. Topics may include "I love you" messages to parents and grandparents, an exchange of classmates' phone numbers, birthday greetings, get well messages and occasionally, notes to say 'I'm sorry'.

Reminder notes

Use reminder notes as part of everyday classroom life such as:

- ❖ to the teacher (Bring *Where is the Green Sheep?*)
- ❖ for the class (Swimming tomorrow – bring togs and towel in named bag)
- ❖ for a child (Eugene not on bus today - going with Grandma)
- ❖ for the parents' notice board (No tuck shop this Wednesday)

Thank you notes and emails

Incorporate thank-you notes and emails into everyday classroom life by replying to individuals, for example, a thank you letter to a child for a plant.

Class 'thank you' notes or emails can be written to:

- ❖ another class for their drama performance
- ❖ a visiting speaker after a presentation to the class
- ❖ a store owner after a class excursion to the store
- ❖ a parent after helping with a baking session, an excursion or concert
- ❖ a buddy class for helping with the 'One hundred day' party

Get well cards

Facilitate this optional activity if a child is away sick for some time. Children make cards or use email. Key words are listed on the word wall to help with spelling.

Going away cards

Facilitate this optional activity if a child is leaving the class. Children make the cards and key words are listed on the board or a chart to help with spelling.

Making lists

Compile lists of topic words, for example *Australian Animals* (p. 58). Display prominently and encourage children to refer to them as necessary for writing and spelling.

Making labels

Insist that children write a label for a creation or construction (p. 22) if they want to display it on a designated shelf, for example: *Do not touch this robot* and *Please don't touch*:



Children' labels for their constructions

Note: To a young child, 'pez' and 'dot' may sound like 'please' and 'don't'. 'Tuch' is an apt phonetic spelling of 'touch'.