



Lesson 3: Creating a Postcard Collection

Introduction:

This is a project that will help your students understand United States geography by making connections to their own travels throughout the country and to the travels of Owney.

Lesson:

Step 1: Over the summer before second grade, instruct the students to collect postcards from the different places they travel or where their friends/family live or have traveled.

Step 2: At the beginning of school in the fall, create a bulletin board size outline map of the United States and have the children affix postcards to the map to show the physical and political geography of the country. (Note mountains, plains, rivers, lakes, state capitals, main products, interesting attractions, etc.)

Step 3: Discuss Owney's story and his status as Railway Mail Service mascot in the late nineteenth century and use the map to show where he traveled. Using Owney's Interactive Map, you can select and mark many of his destinations on your map with stick-on dot stickers.

Step 4: If there are states with missing postcards, you might solicit the assistance of children in other grades to complete your collection. Families will rally to the cause and you will have helped through this project to create a sense of community in your school.

*Your post card collection may be quite large and you will probably have more than enough postcards to affix to the map! Enlist students' ideas for sorting, classifying, and organizing the collection.

Materials Needed:

- Bulletin board size outline map of the United States
- Postcards contributed by students
- Containers to hold postcards
- Postcard sorting sheet (optional)



Resources and Bibliography:

Owney's Interactive Map <http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/owney/#map>

The Train of States, Peter Sis (2004)

Greetings from the 50 States, How They Got Their Names, Sheila Keenan, illus. Selina Alko (2008)

Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea, Vera Williams and her daughter Jennifer (1988)

The Magic Cornfield, Nancy Willard (1997)