

Central Junior High School
400 N. Broadway
Moore, OK 73160

September 22, 2011

Dear Eighth-Grade Teacher,

Greetings from Central Junior High School, located in Moore, Oklahoma, a suburb of Oklahoma City. This fall, eighth-grade students at CJH are participating in a nationwide challenge called The Great American Mail Race. This project connects students from around the country with the goal of sharing stories about their lives, schools, and communities with others their age.

In the Great American Mail Race, your class members will each write a response to the student whose letter is attached to this one. In addition to responding to him or her, your class members randomly select three other United States cities in which they would like to contact. The assignment is a total of four letters for each student to write. (Feel free to adjust this requirement. I've seen it as many as four other schools and as few as one. We chose three to insure greater odds for responses.) This letter should accompany the students' letter to explain the project to their teacher.

Each of my students selected a school in the city and state of his or her choice. To do so, students visited the "Find a Public School" page of the Kids' Zone: Learning With NCES Website at <http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/tools/AllSchool/map.asp?SearchType=1>. Our goal is to receive as many return letters as possible before our school year ends in May. Attached is the handout we shared with our students. Feel free to use it or modify it to suit your needs.

Please feel free to address the student by name who wrote to you. This way I'll know who to give your letter to! You can send your return letter to:

Central Junior High School
Attn: Shelly Durham
400 North Broadway
Moore, Oklahoma 73160

I hope you decide to join this race. It is a great way to excite students and get them hooked on writing. This lesson can lend itself to geography and social studies as well as English. With any luck, this mail circulation will unite all eighth graders of America and provide a lesson that will stay with them forever.

Sincerely,

Shelly Durham
English Language Arts Teacher

P.S. If you decide NOT to join our race, would you please have one or more of your students respond to this letter? My students are anxiously awaiting responses.