

Becoming Citizens of the World

by Melissa Forney

At an early age, kids need to develop a sense of place in the world, a feeling of companionship to other children and cultures, and to recognize that they have a voice. When confronted with any sort of need that has arisen out of a problem, disaster, or dilemma, no matter how small or big, a citizen of the world asks:



What can I do? What can we do?

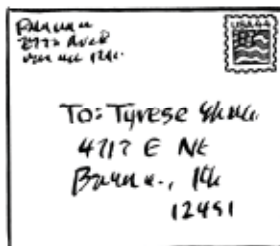
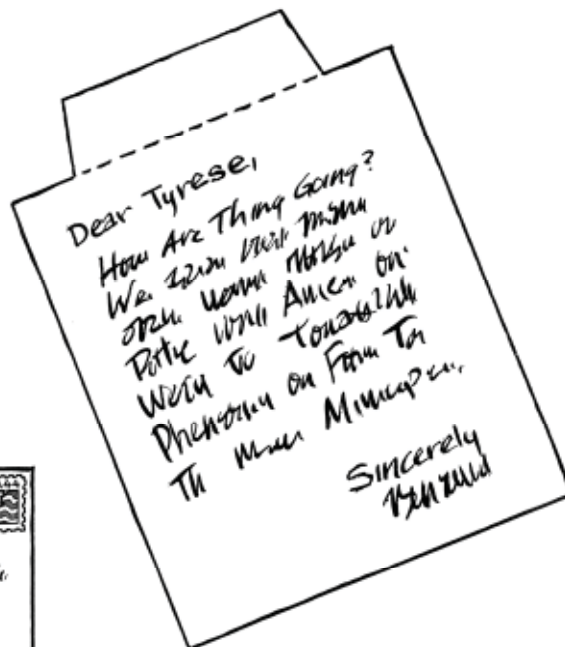
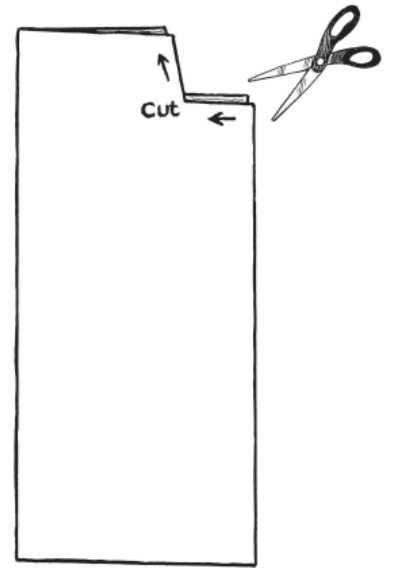
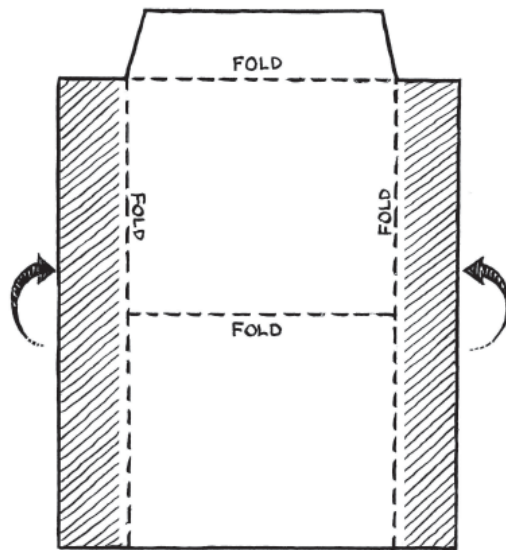
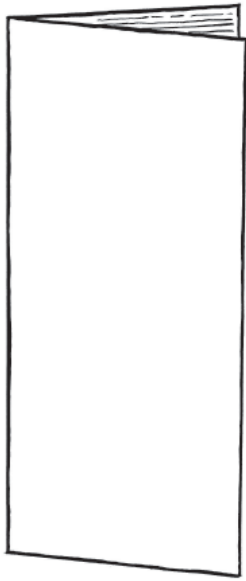
Help your students to become citizens of the world, starting right in their school and neighborhoods. Remind them that even though they are kids, they still have a responsibility to their fellow man to reach out and make the world a better place in whatever manner they can. Discuss local current events, and brainstorm ways to make a difference. Include writing in your strategies. Encourage students to write to servicemen and servicewomen, community helpers, children from other countries, elderly citizens, sick kids with chronic illnesses who are missing months of school, children in hospitals, children in isolated regions, kids who have lived through natural disasters, children in areas of extreme poverty, students with special needs, politicians, lawmakers, scientists, inventors, educators, authors, professors, etc.—anyone who can make a difference in the world.

Show students how to become passionate about the need for change. We certainly can't change *everything*, but in the face of suffering we can do *something*. Help them pack boxes to send to military personnel overseas. Model how to write interesting, thought-provoking letters to children from different regions, countries, or cultures. Guide them through small fund-raisers to donate money to help with specific needs. Involve geography, social studies, math, map skills, social etiquette, and science.

Becoming citizens of the world—asking what can I do and what can we do—and then acting on it will make a huge impact in the world of the present and especially the world of the future. We read about isolated teachers doing special projects and the great satisfaction and passion they create: what if every one of us who reads this blog takes action, as well?



How to Fold a Lettergram for Writing to Pen Pals and Citizens of the World



Countries, Islands, and Unincorporated Territories That Use English as an Official Language or a Widespread Language

American Samoa
Antigua and Barbuda
Australia
Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Botswana
British Virgin Islands
Brunei
Cameroon
Canada
Dominica
Ethiopia
Falkland Islands
Fiji
Gambia
Ghana
Grenada
Guyana
India
Ireland
Israel
Jamaica
Kenya
Kiribati
Lesotho
Liberia
Malawi
Malta
Marshall Islands
Mauritius

Micronesia
Namibia
Nauru
New Zealand
Nigeria
Pakistan
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Pitcairn Island
Rwanda
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Samoa
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Solomon Islands
South Africa
Swaziland
Tanzania
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tuvalu
Uganda
United Kingdom
United States
Vanuatu
Zambia
Zimbabwe



Websites That Help Kids Become Citizens of the World

Writing to Sick Kids in the Hospical

http://www.stjude.org/stjude/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=b8b565c5416ae210VgnVCM1000001e0215acRCRD&vgnnextchannel=11e1add6ca1ae210VgnVCM1000001e0215acRCRD&SearchUrl=search_results.jsp&QueryText=pen%20pals

Learning About and Writing to Sick Kids Around the World

Penpalsacrossthewater@hotmail.com

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-157518473.html>

Writing to Other Children Around the World

http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_penpals.php

Writing to Senior Citizens

http://reachoutamericaonline.com/pen_pal_seniors_

Writing to U.S. Servicemen and Servicewomen

<http://www.adoptaplatoon.org/>

www.kidz4troops.com

<http://booksforsoldiers.com/>

<http://www.give2thetroops.org/items.htm>



Learning About and Writing to Children from Haiti

<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/14/5-ways-to-teach-about-haiti-right-now/>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124236747>

Learning About and Writing to Children from Japan

http://www.slj.com/slj/newslettersnewsletterbucketextrahelping2/891031-477/unesco_launches_kizuna_campaign_for.html.csp

Learning About and Helping Children in Appalachia

<http://abcnews.go.com/2020/children-mountains/story?id=6845926>

<http://www.kidsfirstdental.org/>

Learning About and Helping Children in New Orleans

<http://blog.operationkids.org/tag/brees-dream-foundation/>

Receiving Postcards from Truckers Who Travel Across America

<http://www.truckerbuddy.org/home.htm>

Learning About and Writing to Kids With Special Needs

<http://www.greatschools.org/special-education/health/1009-mix-learning-and-fun-for-kids-with-special-needs.gs?page=1>

<http://www.youthonline.ca/penpals/specialneedspenpals.shtml>

Learning About and Writing to Native American Kids

<http://www.kstrom.net/isk/schools/schools.html>

Donate Toys to the Children of Iraq

<http://www.operationgive.org/>

Writing to Children in Remote Colombia Via Luis Soriano (Biblioburro) (Fascinating!)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/20/world/americas/20burro.html?pagewanted=all>

<http://www.biblioburro.com/en/contacto.html>

Learning About and Writing to Children in Remote North American Schools

(I am not implying that these schools are remote in and of themselves. My reference to *remote* is in relationship to the children who will be writing. For instance, Kids in Saraland, Alabama, might enjoy writing to kids who live in Whittier, Alaska, an area that would be many thousands of miles away.)

Whittier, Alaska

<http://www.whittier.gcisa.net/>

Kotzebue, Alaska

<http://www.greatschools.org/alaska/kotzebue/406-June-Nelson-Elementary-School/>

Kaunakakai, Hawaii

<http://165.248.6.166/data/school.asp?schoolcode=410>

Lanai, Hawaii

<http://hawaii.hi.schoolwebpages.com/education/school/school.php?sectionid=3>

Grand Manan, New Brunswick, Canada

<http://www.district10.nbed.nb.ca/gmcs.htm>

Prince Edward Island, Canada

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/>

Yukon, Canada

<http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/schools/jackhulland/>

Key West, Florida

<http://gra.keysschools.com/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=164812&sessionid=&sessionid=>

Brownsville, Texas

<http://www.bisd.us/longoria/>

Mackinac Island, Michigan

<http://mackinac.eup.k12.mi.us/mips/site/default.asp>



Learning About and Writing to American Children Who Live Overseas

DODDS (Department of Defense Dependents Schools)(These are all over the world! This is an excellent opportunity to write to American/English speaking children who live in other countries)

<http://www.eu.dodea.edu/schools/schoolsites.php>

<http://www.pac.dodea.edu/aboutus/contacts/ContactSchools.htm>

List of Virtual Schools

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_virtual_schools#Idaho

School of the Air for Australian Children Who Live in Remote Areas of Australia

Alice Springs

http://www.assoa.nt.edu.au/_CONTACTS/contactus.html

Learning About and Writing to Children on Pitcairn Island (VERY small school, maybe 6–8 students)

<http://library.puc.edu/pitcairn/pitcairn/education.shtml>

