



What Can You Do With an Envelope or Two?

Tips for Using Envelopes in Your Classroom

Teachers are pros at turning everyday objects into effective teaching aids, and one of the best tools around is envelopes! Big, little, business, manila—envelopes can be used in the classroom to reinforce a variety of skills, such as writing stories, researching topics, sequencing letters or story events, and strengthening math concepts. What can you do with an envelope or two? Read on to find out!



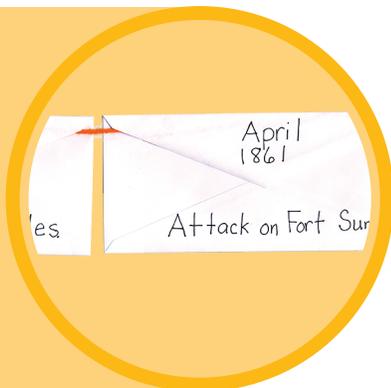
Make an envelope book.

For each student, cut the flaps from five or more Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelopes (Item #633888). Punch two holes in the left side of each envelope; then tie the envelopes together with yarn to make a booklet. Starting with the second envelope, the student labels each envelope with a subtopic for an assigned report and adds illustrations. Then he writes a letter about that subtopic to a friend, folds the letter, and slips it inside that envelope. When all letters have been written, he writes a title on the first envelope and adds an illustration. Students can write about different story characters, US regions, animals, human body systems—the possibilities are limitless!



Make an instant writing center.

Gather several Office Depot® Brand Clasp Envelopes (Item #330816). Attach a colorful sticker that features a character or object to each envelope and write a prompt. Then place the envelopes at a center. A student chooses an envelope and writes a story to respond to the prompt. He then places his finished story in the envelope for you to review later.



Make a timeline or sequence story events.

Hang a clothesline in your classroom using 3M™ Command™ Utility Hooks (Item #215121) and a length of cord or yarn. Gather a supply of Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelopes (Item #633888). Label the flap-side of each envelope with an alphabet letter, a historic event and date, or an event from a story. Then challenge students to hang the envelopes in order on the clothesline. Seal the envelopes after checking the order for accuracy.



Build measurement and money skills.

Number each of five Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelopes (Item #633888). Then stuff the envelopes with varying amounts of paper or other objects, such as paper clips or erasers. Students weigh each envelope on a scale and then use a current postage chart to determine the postage needed to mail each envelope. Then they add to find the total cost of mailing all five envelopes.



Practice data skills.

Write the name of a US city and its state abbreviation on each of several Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelopes (Item #633888). A student or pair of students selects an envelope. After doing a search to find that city's zip codes, the student determines the mean, mode, median, and range of the numbers formed by the zip codes.



Help students organize research notes.

When you assign a topic for a student to research, have him seal an Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelope (Item #633888) and cut it in half to create pockets for the subtopics in his report. Then have him label each pocket with a subtopic and glue it inside a file folder. For fun, have the student decorate each pocket with Scotch® Expressions Stained Glass Tape (Item #186167) before labeling the pocket with a subtopic. Direct the student to take notes on index cards and place them in the matching pockets. When it's time to write his report, the student will find everything he needs!



Encourage story writing.

Give each child an Office Depot® Brand All-Purpose Envelope (Item #633888). Direct him to open the envelope flap and draw a house on the envelope (decorating the flap as the house's roof). Then have him write a story about the house's occupants or a description of the house.