

Valentines Day Action Teaching guide

Send a Valentine's Day/Dia Del Amor Y La Amistad postcard to show some love to migrant children at the border! In the spirit of Amor y Amistad, love and friendship, as Valentine's Day is celebrated in much of Mexico and Central America, our goal is to collect thousands of postcards to represent the children impacted by our nation's zero-tolerance immigration policy. Thousands of children are waiting with their families, have been separated from their families or made the journey to the border without an adult and are currently in detention. A group of activists, led by Activist Patricia Okoumou, who climbed the Statue of Liberty on July 4, 2018 in protest of family separations and the Trump administration's zero-tolerance immigration policies, will collect these cards at a gallery in El Paso, Texas and use them in art actions at detention centers and along the border wall. Help us reach our goal of an outpouring of amor y amistad, love and friendship, from people of all ages across the country. In a time of heightened criminalization and marginalization of immigrants and people of color, help spread our message of solidarity with and concern for the well-being of children and those who are most vulnerable in our world. Host a postcard writing pop-up for kids where they can decorate and write a postcard as an act of love and protest. Download and print one of our designs, or make your own!

Send to:

The Glasbox
210 Poplar St
El Paso, TX 79901

Teaching points for the Valentine's Day postcard writing project:

Day of Love and Friendship- Dia Del Amor Y La Amistad

In our neighboring countries and continents to the south, Mexico, Central and South America, Valentine's Day is often referred to as the day of Amor y Amistad, love and friendship. People may share a card, flower or gift with an Amigo Secreto, or secret friend. Many people who are migrating to the United States are from countries in these regions. They are leaving their homes and coming to a new country in search of a safe place to live or to join relatives and friends. Many of these people are families and children. Like we would welcome a new neighbor or newcomers into our classroom communities, let's welcome new immigrants to our country. Has anyone in your family moved to a new place? How were they welcomed there? What challenges did they face? Is there an immigration story in your family? Write a postcard in the spirit of love and friendship.



By Mary Hawkins

The Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty is a monument placed in New York harbor in 1886, when Ellis Island was the main port of entry for immigrants arriving in the United States. The statue is seen all around the world as a symbol of freedom and democracy, a beacon of welcome. The poem that is engraved on the statue, *The New Colossus*, by Emma Lazarus.

The New Colossus

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

This poem's most famous line is *Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free*. Read and discuss the meaning of the statue and this poem.

The major ports of entry in the United States are no longer on the East Coast, but along the Southern border with Mexico. In Juan Ortiz's mural, *Brown Mother of Exiles*, he refers to another line of Lazarus' poem- *and her name Mother of Exiles*. The statue is made of copper, originally a shiny brown color until it weathered to its famous pale green. He paints the Statue in its original luminous brown, a woman of color, reaching out to welcome a young girl with brown skin and black hair, reflecting the current population of new immigrants at the southern border who are mostly brown folks of latino or indigenous descent. Read and discuss his description of

the meaning behind the stunning images in the mural. This mural will be dedicated to Patricia Okoumou on February 15, 2019!

Mural by Juan Ortiz El Paso, TX



Patricia Okoumou

On July 4th, 2018 Patricia Okoumou climbed up to the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty to protest family separation and the Trump administration's zero-tolerance immigration policies at the border. Her continued efforts to work for justice and actions as an activist have drawn media attention and raised awareness of the continued policies of detention of migrant children in the United States. Discuss what an activist is, and the symbolism behind Patricia Okoumou's protest on July 4, 2018. Send a postcard to celebrate her courageous act and show the world that there are people who are willing to take risks and make sacrifices to stand up against the separation of families and detention of young people upon arrival in the United States. Discuss the importance of standing up for others and ways that people can do that. Send a postcard to say we stand with Patricia and her brave actions on July 4, 2018.

"When they go low,
we go high.
And I went as high
as I could."

Patricia Okoumou



The reading list below has suggestions for books related to immigration for younger children.

[Recommended Reading List for Pre-K and Elementary-Aged Children](#)

Below is a link to an inspiring song written by children's musician Stephen Figurasmith - they performed it to introduce keynote speaker Patricia Okoumou at the 2018 Little Chairs Big Differences Early Education Conference.

[The Patricia Okoumou Song](#)

Dia
del Amor
Y La Amistad



Print and color this postcard at www.patriciaokoumou.com