

eslactive

Writing A Postcard

Tags: [beginner](#), [future \(present continuous\)](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [past simple](#), [present perfect simple](#), [sports and hobbies](#), [travel](#)

In the Writing A Postcard ESL activity students write an informal message home about their vacation so far.

 1+  30-60+ mins  Card (Optional)

Setup

If you can by any chance get your hands on enough real postcards for students to write on, that's a great option. Alternatively, younger students can make their own postcards on pieces of white card, writing their message on one side and drawing on the other (a fun project for kids). With adults, it may be more appropriate for them to just write the message itself.

Activity

1. Ask the students to imagine they are currently on holiday/vacation. You can direct them to focus on different things according to the target language (e.g. imagining they are at the start/end of the trip to practise future/past tenses).
2. Each student thinks of a destination and what they would do there. They could create a mind map with content ideas if necessary (activities, weather, food etc.).
3. Students then write a description of their trip so far as an informal message home to a friend/family member.
4. They swap their messages to read and peer-correct.
5. If students use real postcards or make their own, they then write up the final version.

6. If you want to extend the activity, you could even add in a version of [Draw Your Weekend](#). Students swap postcards and draw a set of pictures from the description. They then pass their pictures on to another student, who tries to write a description from them.

Tip: Completed postcards could make a great classroom display – what about hanging them on strings so you can see both sides?

Target Language

The Writing A Postcard ESL activity is designed for beginner and lower intermediate classes. It can be used to practise the [past simple](#), as well as basic [present perfect simple](#) sentences if desired. Students imagine they are at least halfway through their trip and focus on completed activities/experiences (e.g. *On Saturday we went to the beach, I've eaten so many new things, I've already seen three kangaroos!*).

Alternatively, they can imagine themselves near the start of the trip, and focus on the [future using the present continuous](#). In this case they talk about their near future plans, e.g. *On Thursday we're going to a museum..., On Friday we're flying to a different island...*

This type of subject matter is also a popular way to practise the structure of an informal letter (especially with school-age kids). Students concentrate on using appropriate salutations and sign-offs, as well as structuring their main text by splitting different topics into different paragraphs. Be aware though that due to the length of this kind of text, it's usually better to do these messages on paper rather than a physical postcard!

The Writing A Postcard ESL activity is also a great match for the vocabulary topics of [travel](#) or [sports and hobbies](#). For the latter, ask students to include lots of different activities they could do in their location (sailing, hiking, cycling etc.).

For a similar exercise in which students write about their experiences on a completed trip (and which is often of more value to higher level students), see [Travel Blog](#).