



Flat Stanley

Stanley is a boy who is flattened by a bulletin board while sleeping. While he's flat he has many adventures that only a flat child could have, including sending himself through the mail to visit his friend in California.

Activities:

- Read the book Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown out loud to the class. This takes about a week if you read about 2 chapters a day (they're very short and have many pictures).
- Talk about Stanley's adventures, focusing on the special things he can do because he is flat and his trip to California.
- Make flat selves. Use die cut people and have students glue a picture of their face onto a person. Children can then clothe them. Alternatively, students could draw and colour self-portraits onto the die cut people. Laminate for durability – they are going on adventures and easily lose clothes and/or body parts while away.
- Run a couple small group sessions on letter writing, how do you start a letter? How do you end a letter? What do you say in a letter? Let the kids brainstorm ideas. Talk about formal greetings and closings such as "Dear" and "Sincerely." When you write out the final letter be sure to include a brief summary of who Stanley is and what happened to make the child flat.
- Ask students to bring in the address of a friend or relative who is willing to take their flat self. Be prepared with a handful of your own friends or relatives who are willing to take flats for children who have no one to send them to.
- Mail the flats. (You could take a field trip to the Post Office and organise a tour at the same time.)
- After the flats are gone, look at maps, both a city map to map the student's addresses and school as well as state/national/world maps to map where their flats went. Compared where the flats went with where you and the students live and look at landmarks such as oceans and lakes and familiar places.
- As the flats come back to school, the students get to share their pictures and letter with the class and then display them on the wall. (Put them up somewhere parents can access them. They are almost as excited about the pictures and stories as the students are!)
- Because the students enjoy playing with their flat selves you could have a Fantastic Adventures of Flat Friends at School, where students are given the opportunity to take their flat friends around school and take pictures of adventures they had at school.

Tips:

- Set up a field trip to the post office. If possible visit a location that is also a sorting centre so you get to see the big machines and how the mail gets sorted out.
- Encourage families to send the flats outside the city of residence to a place the student doesn't visit often.
- Set a final deadline for the flats to be returned by or in the mail by.
- Work on having the kids learn their own addresses while mapping.
- Have a provision for people who won't be able to print pictures, i.e. email.
- Do a unit on mail and post offices, add boxes and mail and mailbox to the room.