

Going to the Post Office

Time: Around 2 hours

What to Bring:

- Money to mail a letter
- A letter (written by the family) to send to family or a friend
- An envelope or a package of envelopes
- Return address of family
- Address of family or friend
- Oxford Picture Dictionary

Before you go:

- Find out where the nearest post office is. Can you walk there or do you need to take the bus?

Steps:

1. Arrive at least a half hour before you will leave to go to the post office.
2. Sit with the family and explain what you will be doing that day. Tell and show them what they will be doing at the post office. Have them think of somebody they want to mail a letter to. If they can't think of anybody, or don't know an address, have them send a letter to you.
3. Help them write a short letter about something they have done recently or something they have experienced here in America.
4. Before you go to the post office, make sure they have enough money to send the letter. Remember, if the letter is going overseas, it will cost more.
5. Also before you leave for the post office, show the family how to properly address a letter, as well as putting their return address. Do not stamp the letter.
6. Once you get to the post office, help the refugee family get in line. If they need to take a number to receive service, do so. While waiting in line, talk to them again about what you all are doing there. Point out the stamps, packing materials and other parts of the post office that are interesting
7. Once at the counter, talk to the postal employee about what the family needs to do. Have the employee meter the letter. This will be a good example for them for the future to make sure they don't spend more than they need on postage. Help the family make sure they understand what the postal employee is doing for them.
8. With help from the employee, explain what else can be done at the post office. This includes changing your address if you move, applying for a passport, and wiring money, in addition to many other things.
9. During the walk or bus ride home, have the family explain to you what they just did and how they would go about sending another letter. Reinforce the necessity to properly address an envelope.

10. If you want, help the family address several envelopes for future use. These could be to family or friends, but more specifically could be used for mailing bills. This can be paired with financial training to make sure that they pay their bills on time.

Tips:

- Help the family set up an address book with important addresses in it, such as companies they pay bills to, yourself, family, and friends.
- Help them find the number to their local post office, so they can call if they have questions. The US Postal Service customer service number is 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777).
- If you feel the family is ready financially, show them how to mail letters from the home using a stamp. Be sure to familiarize yourself with how to mail from their house, as it might be different from your