



Holiday Mailbox

Episode 12

Introduction

If your child is distracted by holidays, then try turning learning into holiday-themed play! This DIY mailbox and holiday card-making station will have your child writing and play-pretending in no time.

Playing pretend helps develop narrative skills, an important step in early literacy; creating their own cards and letters (real OR pretend) improves dexterity and writing skills as well as exposes your child to more letters and words. You can even post some of these cards in your real mailbox to share some holiday cheer with your family and friends.

Best of all, this learning-packed activity can be played year-round!



Supplies

- A box
- Colorful paper and cards
- Stickers, bows, and other card decorations
- Wrapping paper, butcher paper, or a few paper shopping bags
- Markers
- Scissors or box cutter
- Tape

Additional Resources

Visit Plano Public Library's official [YouTube channel](#) to view this activity and other Library Make videos

Check out our blog post about this activity at [Plano Library Learns](#)

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Instructions

1. Set up a holiday card-writing table: On a low table, place a basket filled with colorful paper and envelopes; add stickers, markers, and other items to decorate the cards. Tape cards with holiday-themed pictures, words, and phrases to the table for your child to try copying. Cards with family members' names are great, too!
2. Create a post office box.
 - a. Cut slots in your box: Using scissors or a box cutter, cut a large slot near the top of one side of your box. At the bottom of the opposite side, cut out three sides of a rectangle to create a flap to open and close—this is how you'll remove the mail from your mailbox. Be careful—cutting cardboard is for adults only!
 - b. Wrap your box with paper: Newspaper, wrapping paper, or a paper shopping bag will work well. Remember to cut slots in the paper for the slots in your box.
 - c. Label your box: Write "Post Office" over the mail slot on the front. Add any other "official"-seeming labels you like, such as the hours during which mail is collected



Cut a slot in the front...



...then cut a flap in the back.



Label your box.

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How to Use Your Card Station & Mailbox

Parents, get started by writing a note, a single word or just a letter on a card. Put it in an envelope labeled with your child's name, and drop it in the mailbox. Create several of these "letters" and then let your child sort, open, and read them. This helps your child learn what mail is, as well as exposes them to more words and letters.

Playing pretend develops narrative skills, so have your child create their own holiday cards at your card-making station, then play "post office" with your new mailbox. You can even post some of these cards in your real mailbox to share holiday cheer with your family and friends.



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