



THE CLASSROOM CONNECTION: FAQ

Q: What is The Classroom Connection Program?

A: The Classroom Connection Program is a classroom writing exchange designed to help students (grades 2 – 5) connect to one another as they learn about the range of cultures, geographies and people outside of their neighborhoods. Acknowledging the diversity of students in New Jersey and the unique characteristics of life in each of its 566 municipalities and 21 counties, The Classroom Connection uses letter writing and a pen-pal approach to help students to connect to each other, to the world around them and to their own hopes and dreams.

Q: What are the goals of The Classroom Connection Program?

A:

- To encourage students to write and develop their literacy and communication skills.
- To introduce students from different schools and towns around New Jersey to each other.
- To help students learn about what makes different towns and schools unique and special.
- To help students develop greater perspective and appreciation for where they live and what they have.

Q: How will classrooms be matched?

A: Teachers will register on their class on The Classroom Connection website, completing a form that provides basic demographic information. Our matching system will match classes by grade, and diverse demographics (geographic, cultural, and/or socio-economic). Teachers will receive their match confirmation by email along with instructions for the writing project.

Q: How will the letter writing work?

A: There will be at least three rounds of letters that will be sent between classrooms. Teachers integrate the letter writing process into their planned language arts curriculum.

Q: What will students write about?

A: There are three primary topics students will be writing about:

- **About Me** (school, family, friends, hobbies, pets, favorites)
- **Places** (where I live, what makes my town special, favorite places, dream vacations, places I've been or lived before)
- **Dreams** (what I want to be, where I want to live, how I would make the world a better place)

Q: How can we incorporate technology into the process?

A: The basic project ensures that no class is excluded due to technology, but if both teachers feel that technology will work between the matched classes, you are welcome to use technology vs. handwritten correspondence.

Q: What if the other teacher is slow to respond, or does not respond at all?

A: This is the most frustrating part of the program for us. **Please remember that students are waiting for your letters on the other end of the connection.** We understand that challenges in the classroom may slow down responses, and things come up, however we ask that both teachers do their best to respond to each other in a timely fashion. We will provide both email and phone contact information when you get your match-- you are responsible to communicate with your partner. If timing permits, we may be able to help resolve the issue or find you a new match, but we can't promise this. Consider carefully your ability to carry the program out before registering. Thanks!

Q: What do you do if you've begun the process and you are not able to continue or complete the program?

A: Life happens and we understand this as adults; but because the students are expecting letters, it's important that you notify your partner teacher promptly so that he/she may inform the students and have an opportunity to process the information. Please also notify Celebrate NJ.

For more information, contact Celebrate NJ at 732.333.0462 or info@celebratenj.org.