



Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation Education Program – Lesson Plans

Grade Level: 3-5

Lesson Topic: Castaway Note in a Bottle

Length: 15 min on the island, 50 min in the classroom

RI Standard of Learning: English (Communication, Creation and Presentation of Text), **Social Studies** (Geography)

Learning Objective: Students will begin to grasp their relationship to the geographic world. They will also learn to compose a letter and see the results of their writing skills.

Materials: Pencil and paper, empty plastic Poland Spring water bottle with label peeled off (12-16 oz), topographic map of New England or RI

Vocabulary: current, topographic map, geography

Procedure:

On Rose Island: Have students create a letter (one per group, usually two groups) with the classroom contact information and a request that the finder of the letter please respond. Have the members of the group sign their names. Then place the letter rolled up in the Poland Spring Bottle and secure the cap. Have a volunteer throw the bottle into the bay.

In the Classroom:

- Introduction: Once you have received a response back, let the class know. Ask students to recall the letter they made while they were out at Rose Island. Let the students know that the note worked and someone responded. Give them the information about the person or company that responded.
- Development: Locate the responder's address on a map. If you have access to the Internet, this would be really easy with a service like Map Quest. Otherwise you could just find the location on a topographic map. Trace the possible paths the bottle could have taken. Have the students calculate the distance that the bottle traveled. Ask them if that was where they anticipated the bottle ending up. Use the map to have the students think about current flow in Narragansett Bay. Which way does it flow, North, South, East, West?
- Closure: Have the students compose a thank you letter to the responder of the note in the bottle. Compose the letter on the board and then have one student transfer it to writing paper.

Evaluation: Observe students to ensure that everyone is participating. Ask students what they would do differently next time. Have them compose a paragraph explaining the details.

References:

www.roseislandlighthouse.org - use the map section of the website