

# Turn junk mail into an effective learning tool



Instead of throwing away the junk mail you receive, use it to help your child improve skills in geography, math, map reading and more.

Appoint your child the family mail detective. Ask her to examine each piece of mail to find where it came from. Help her search for a postmark, publisher or return address.

Once your child pinpoints the places of origin, help her:

- **Locate each place on a map.** Get or print out a large U.S. map and hang it up. Your child can use dots to mark where the mail came from. Have her keep track and see if more mail comes from certain areas.
- **Sort the mail using different criteria.** Sort by state or regions of the country, by climate or by which



ocean or mountain range the mailer's address is closest to.

- **Measure how far away** each place is from your hometown. Which mail pieces traveled the longest distance? The shortest?
- **Use a highway map to plan a pretend trip** between two cities where mail originated. Measure the mileage between them. Go online to research interesting places to see or things to do on your imaginary trip.