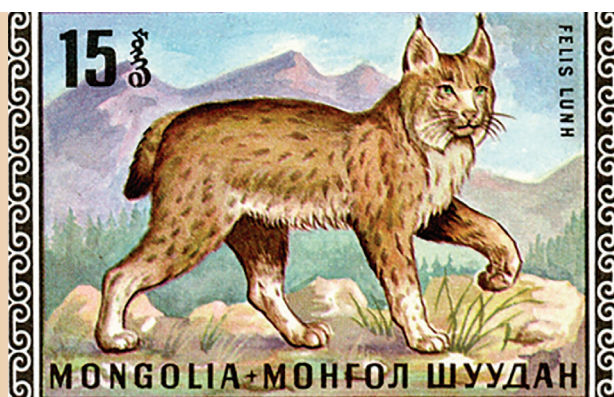




## What's in a Stamp?



### Mini Fact:

This stamp with an image of a lynx is from Mongolia.

Have you ever looked closely at stamps that arrive on your mail? With many people using email and other electronic communications, your family may not get as much mail as you once did. But stamps can still be works of art that remind us of events, people and places.

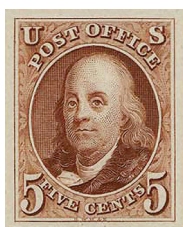
The study and collecting of stamps is called **philately** (fuh-LAT-uh-lee). More than 5 million people in the United States are philatelists. It's a hobby that can be done no matter where you live or what season it is.

### Some postal history

Before the mid-1800s, people didn't use stamps or envelopes to send items to others. They just folded and sealed a piece of paper. The person who received the letter had to pay for its delivery.

But in England, the postmaster general changed all that. He decided that the sender had to pay for the postage and attach a small piece of colored paper to the outside.

The first British stamp cost 1 cent and featured a picture of Queen Victoria. The United States soon followed, with 5- and 10-cent stamps showing Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. People began collecting the stamps right away.



### What's in a stamp?

Some postage stamps have become quite valuable to collectors. Philatelists learn how to identify a stamp and its value. The parts of a

stamp include:

- the name of the country that issued the stamp. The only country that doesn't use its name on stamps is Great Britain, which uses an image of the current king or queen.
- the cost, or face value, of the stamp.
- the design or topic of the stamp.
- the **cancellation**. These are the lines or marks that cover the stamp to show that it has been used.
- the color of the stamp.



This stamp was issued in Great Britain for the queen's 90th birthday.

### Collect your own way

The cool thing about stamp collecting is that you can make up the rules for your own collection. You can decide to collect new, unused stamps or those that have already been through the mail. You can collect by country, topic, color or age, and you can collect just stamps or the envelopes and other mail they appear on.

Start by saving mail and stamps that are delivered to your house. Ask friends and family members to save stamps for you.

New stamps can be purchased at the post office. Joining a local stamp club can be a great way to share your hobby and trade stamps. Philatelists also sell their stamps to other collectors.

## Become a collector

You can keep your stamps or envelopes in any kind of container, but an album or notebook will help you be more organized and will keep your stamps in better condition. You may also need:

- tongs to handle the stamps. This keeps the oil on your fingers away from the paper.
- a magnifying glass. This will help you see the fine details in the stamp.

### Removing stamps

Philatelists soak stamps off the envelopes they were sent on. You can do this, too.

1. Trim the paper from around the stamp.
2. If the envelope is brightly colored, set it aside. Soak the bright colors together and the white or light colors together.
3. Put the stamps face side up in shallow lukewarm water. You can do several at a time.
4. In a few minutes, the stamps will begin to float away from the envelope. Wait until they're completely free.
5. Rinse the back of the stamp to get all the glue off. Put the stamps between two paper towels, then lay a book on top to keep the stamps from curling while drying. Let them dry overnight.

## Resources



### On the Web:

- stamps.org/Young-Collector
- stamps.org/YSCA
- s.si.edu/2j1r3dy
- bit.ly/2j1kh7y

### At the library:

- "Stamp It! The Ultimate Stamp Collecting Activity Book" by Leslie Jonath

## Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of stamp collecting are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



- ALBUM, ART,
- CANCELLATION,
- COLLECT, COUNTRY,
- DESIGN, ENVELOPE,
- GLUE, HISTORY, HOBBY,
- LETTER, MAGNIFY,
- PHILATELY, POSTAL,
- SOAK, STAMPS, STUDY,
- TONGS, TOPIC, VALUE.

S C A N C E L L A T I O N F X  
 T V C O U N T R Y A E U L A V  
 A L O M S Y D N K M U B L A Q  
 M E G A T Y T G A L A T S O P  
 P T L G U Y R I O C I P O T A  
 S T U N D I A S S K H O B B Y  
 C E E I Y Y L E T A L I H P I  
 U R L F G H W D Y R O T S I H  
 U G N Y E P O L E V N E K G K  
 X T O N G S J H T C E L L O C

## Cook's Corner

### Chicken Tortilla Soup

#### You'll need:

- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cups shredded or cubed cooked chicken breast (poached, grilled, roasted or rotisserie)

- 1 cup prepared salsa of your choice
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup crumbled baked corn tortilla chips



#### What to do:

1. In a large saucepan, combine tomatoes, chicken and salsa. Set pan over medium heat and bring to a simmer.
2. Decrease heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove pan from heat and stir in cilantro.
3. Ladle soup into bowls and top with tortilla chips. Serves 4.

Adapted from "The Robin Takes 5 Cookbook for Busy Families" with permission from Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com).

\* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

## 7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. error (7) \_\_\_\_\_
2. famous sunken ship (7) \_\_\_\_\_
3. something you eat with (4) \_\_\_\_\_
4. 5-cent coin (6) \_\_\_\_\_
5. grown-up (5) \_\_\_\_\_
6. where school lunch is served (9) \_\_\_\_\_
7. place to store a car (6) \_\_\_\_\_

RK	CAF	EL	LT
MIS	TI	ADU	TAKE
RIA	TAN	ETE	AGE
GAR	NICK	FO	IC

Answers: mistake, Titanic, fork, adult, cafeteria, garage.

## Mini Jokes



- Sam:** What stays in the corner but travels all over the world?  
**Pam:** A postage stamp!

## Eco Note



Speaking of stamps and mail ... If you'd like to tell people what you think about saving our Earth, write a letter to your local newspaper. When kids write in, readers pay attention. Kids have a special way of looking at the world. If the newspaper doesn't print your first letter, don't give up. Keep writing. Make sure to include your name and age.

adapted with permission from "The New 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth" by The Earthworks Group, Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com)

## For later:

Look in your newspaper for items about the U.S. Postal Service. The price of a first-class stamp has recently increased. Can you find the new price?

## Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: [bbs.amuniversal.com/teaching\\_guides.html](http://bbs.amuniversal.com/teaching_guides.html)

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