



John F. Kennedy and First Day Cover Activity

Introduction

On May 29, 1964 the United States Post Office issued a commemorative stamp for President John F. Kennedy. On that day, JFK would have been forty-seven years old. Upon the death of a president, the USPS issues a stamp, usually on his birthday. It is cancelled from a town that was significant to his life. JFK's stamp was cancelled from what was considered his "hometown," Boston, Massachusetts. The envelope, or cover, is called a "first day cover" because it is cancelled on the first day the stamp goes on sale at that special location. Someone then adds the artwork, called a cachet, which depicts the topic of the stamp. The artwork may be hand drawn, colored or not, or it may be computer generated, and printed. The possible scenes are endless and limited only by an individual's creativity.

Procedure

Show the First Day Cover Image and ask students to analyze and list as many facts as they can about John F. Kennedy. Have students share their findings:

Stamp:

Quote – "And the glow from that fire can truly light the world"
Flame – representing the quote, or JFK's life?
Photograph of John F. Kennedy
Life dates – 1917-1963

Postmark:

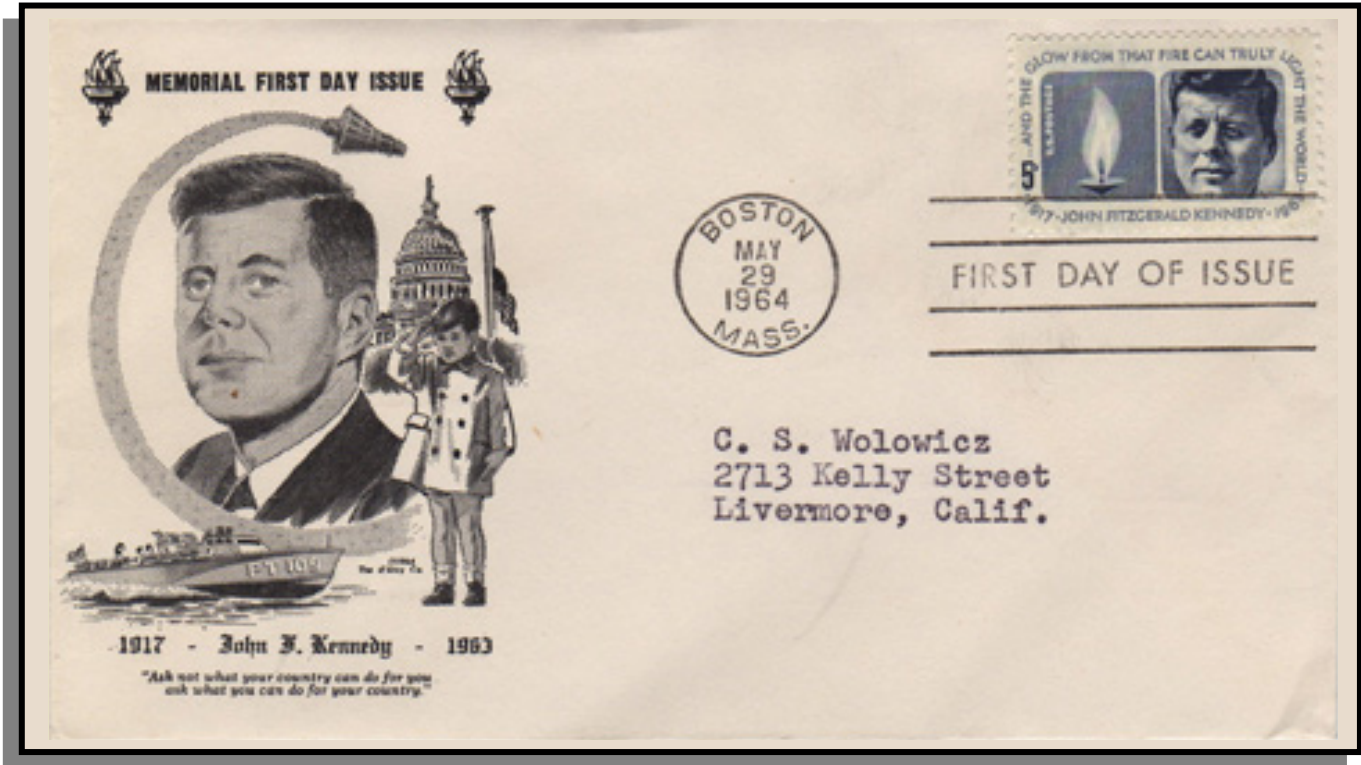
May 29, 1964 - JFK's forty-seventh birthday
Boston, Massachusetts – state that JFK called home

Cachet:

Life dates 1917-1963
PT109 to represent his service in the Navy during World War II
Capitol to represent his presidency
Quote: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" (from his inaugural address)
Space capsule to represent his goal to put a man on the moon
Flag at half staff to represent his assassination
His son, John Kennedy, Jr., saluting his father's passing hearse

Activity

Give each student an envelope template and ask him or her to design a cachet depicting President John F Kennedy's visit to Fort Worth, Texas on November 22, 1963.





TRIBUTE
FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Envelope Template

