Lesson Plan: *Dear Altadena*

prepared by the *Dear Altadena* Collective

Introduction:

Dear Altadena is a public art project organized by a collective of graduate students in a digital activism course at the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. The project involves collecting postcards that are written to the future of Altadena and collected as a time capsule in remembrance of the Eaton fire, for its upcoming first anniversary. This lesson plan provides a version of the project suitable for K-12 classrooms with linked resources and discussion questions.

Links:

About *Dear Altadena*
Postcard Templates and Submission Form
Examples of Submitted Work
Community Resources
Altadena Historical Society

Activity Age Group: K-12 (flexible)

Objectives/Learning Goals:
- Students will articulate their vision of the past and/or future of Altadena, from a combination of personal experience and historical research
- Students will communicate this vision in postcard form, using a combination of visual design and writing
- Students will participate in a collaborative archiving and publishing effort, either by submitting their work to the project's public website or creating their own time capsule as a class

Associated Standards:

- California Common Core:
    - K: L.K.1. / L.K.2. / W.K.1. / W.K.2. / W.K.3. / W.K.6. / W.K.7.
    - 1: L.1.1. / L.1.2. / W.1.1. / W.1.6 / W.1.7
    - 2: L.2.1. / L.2.2. / W.2.1. / W.2.6. / W.2.7.
    - 3: L.3.1. / L.3.2. / L.3.3. / W.3.4. / W.3.6.
    - 4: L.4.1. / L.4.2. / L.4.3. / W.4.4. / W.4.6.
    - 5: L.5.1. / L.5.2. / L.5.3. / W.5.4. / W.5.6.
    - 6: L.6.1. / L.6.2. / L.6.3. / W.6.4. / W.6.6. / WHST.6-8.4. / WHST.6-8.6.
    - 7: L.7.1. / L.7.2. / L.7.3. / W.7.4. / W.7.6. / WHST.6-8.4. / WHST.6-8.6.
    - 8: L.8.1. / L.8.2. / L.8.3. / W.8.4. / W.8.6. / WHST.6-8.4. / WHST.6-8.6.
    - 9-10: L.9-10.1. / L.9-10.2. / W.9-10.4. / W.9-10.6. / WHST.9-10.4. / WHST.9-10.6.
    - 11-12: L.11-12.1. / L.11-12.2. / W.11-12.4. / W.11-12.6. / WHST.11-12.4. / WHST.11-12.6.

Materials Needed:
- Printed copies of the postcard templates provided at the link above
- Colored pencils, markers, and assorted art and writing supplies
- Camera/scanner and computer for upload (optional)

Lesson Procedures:
1) Print out copies of the postcard templates provided at the link above
2) OPTIONAL: Have students explore the Altadena Historical Society website prior to designing the cards and choose one published material/story/etc to include on their card
    a) Grade-appropriate research standards can apply here
3) Allow students to choose which of the templates/prompts they would like to complete
4) Provide students with art supplies and give them adequate time to complete their postcard

       a) If you have students who want to create their pieces digitally, you may distribute the templates from our website in jpg/png/pdf form

5) OPTIONAL: If you would like to share your class's work, feel free to redact any identifying information you deem appropriate to remove, take photos/scans of the completed postcards, and upload them at the submission form linked above!

       a) As an alternative, if you do not wish to submit your class's work to the project's website, we suggest creating your own "archive"/time capsule as a class that can take any form needed

          i) Consider: where will the postcards be stored (physically or digitally?); to whom, when, and how will the postcards be available?

Discussion Questions (Tiered by Grade Level):

- Grades K-5:
    - 1) How can understanding the past help us plan for the future?
    - 2) How might we explain the past to someone from the future?
    - 3) How do writing and art help us remember the past?
- Grades 6-8:
    - 1) How does your community remember the past?
    - 2) What can postcards communicate that other modes of writing cannot?
    - 3) What is our role in preserving the past/present for people of the future?
- Grades 9-12:
    - 1) How does evidence function in claims about the past?
    - 2) What is speculative writing?
    - 3) What is an archive? Does a "time capsule" count?