Snail Mail: Kinematics Applied to an International Letter’s Seventeen-Year Journey

ISHAN LEVY, Pittsburgh Obama 6-12 School — The average and instantaneous velocity of a letter sent in 1990 from India and arriving in 2007 in New York City is analyzed using the equations of kinematics. An important question to be addressed is: how does the average speed of “snail mail” compare with that of an actual snail? The distinction between instantaneous versus average kinematic quantities are highlighted in the process.