Adopt a Family and
Share the Joy of Giving!

Holiday Giving Project

Laura Candler
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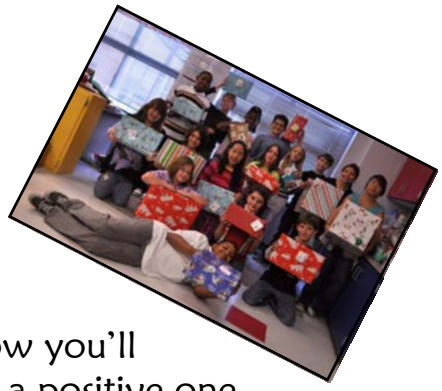
Holiday Giving Project



The holiday season is a perfect time to teach your class about the importance of giving. Why not adopt a needy family and help make their holiday special? Below you'll find suggested steps that will help make the experience a positive one for everyone involved. I've done this every year for many years, and it's always a memorable event. The most exciting day is when I teach my students how to wrap gifts, and we have a wrapping party to wrap their gifts! Of course, the best part is knowing we have helped a family in need.

~ Laura Candler

Holiday Giving Project Action Plan

1. **Discuss the Project** - Before you decide to do this project, explain it to your students and ask for their input. Make sure they understand that you are asking for donations of NEW items and not old toys and clothing. If you adopt a family and your students don't bring in enough money or gifts, the adopted family will be disappointed. You may want to take this on as a grade level project or work with another teacher if you have concerns.

2. **Locate a Needy Family** - Choose a family that lives in a different community or whose children attend a different school. This is to protect the privacy of the recipients. You can do this by working with another school or asking a local organization such as the Salvation Army to provide you with the necessary information. If you go with an organization, ask them if they allow the gifts to be wrapped. Some organizations will not allow you to wrap the gifts to ensure that safe and appropriate gifts are given to children.

3. **Obtain Family Info** - For each member of the adopted family, try to obtain their first names, ages, clothing sizes, and gift wish lists. Use the half page chart on page 3 to record this information and send it home with the letter to parents.

Family Details for Holiday Giving Project

First Name	Gender	Age	Shoe Size	Shirt Size	Dress Size	Pant Size	Gift Ideas

4. **Set Due Dates** - Set the due date for bringing in items and money a few days before you plan to wrap the gifts. That way you can take the money and use it to buy gifts that were not donated. You'll want to choose a date for wrapping gifts that will allow you at least 30 to 90 minutes of uninterrupted time.

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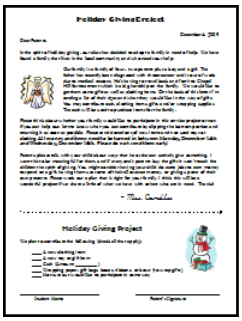
5. **Send Home Parent Letter** - A few weeks before the due date, send home a letter explaining the project (see sample on page 4). If some students don't return the letter, ask them about the situation privately. It may be that their family is not in a position to help. They should still be included in the wrapping party and should not be singled out for their inability to participate.



6. **Collect the Gifts** - As students bring in the gifts and boxes, make sure they are labeled with the recipient's names and placed into piles accordingly.
7. **Inventory the Gifts** - On the final collection date, go through the gifts and make sure you have equal numbers of gifts for the children. Use the money donated to purchase additional gifts as needed.
8. **Create Gift Labels** - Since each gift will need its own label, you may want to have your students create the labels the day before you begin wrapping the gifts. Our class preferred not to say who the gifts were from unless we said they were from Santa. Have the students use colored pencils or crayons to decorate the labels with holiday images.

9. **Teach Students How to Wrap Gifts** - Don't assume that your students know how to wrap a gift properly! Many students have never been taught how to estimate the paper needed and fold the ends properly. One easy way to practice is to give each student a box of crayons to wrap for practice. Cut sheets of wrapping paper that are too big for the box so students will have to practice cutting them to the right size. Allow them to practice wrapping the crayon box until they are comfortable with the process.

10. **Wrap Gifts** - When it's time to wrap the actual gifts, assign students a partner. Match students who know how to wrap gifts with students who seem to be having difficulty. Pass out the gifts one at a time and make sure the students put a label on each gift as soon as it's wrapped. When you're finished, take a group photo with the kids holding the gifts.
11. **Deliver Gifts** - Rather than delivering the gifts to the family directly, I usually bring the gifts to the agency or school that helped me find the family. Generally we collect so many gifts that it takes more than one vehicle to transport them! During the holidays, my class enjoys thinking about our adopted family and knowing that we made a difference.

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Holiday Giving Project

December 1st

Dear Parents,

In the spirit of holiday giving, our class has decided to adopt a family in need of help. We have found a family that lives in the local community and who needs our help.

Our family is a family of four - two parents plus a boy and a girl. The father has recently been diagnosed with throat cancer and is out of work due to medical reasons. He's having to travel back and forth to Chapel Hill for treatment which is a big hardship on the family. We would like to get them some gifts as well as clothing items. Attached to this letter, I'm sending a list of their sizes and what they would like in the way of gifts. You may contribute cash, clothing items, gifts, and/or wrapping supplies. The cash will be used to purchase items for the family.

Please think about whether or not your family would like to participate in this service project. If you can help out, let me know what you can contribute by filling out the bottom portion of this letter and returning it as soon as possible. Please send donations of new items and not used toys or clothing. **All money and items need to be turned in between December 14th and December 16th. Please do not send them early!**

Parents, please talk with your child about ways that he or she can actively give something. I want this to be meaningful for them, and if everyone's parents buy the gifts it won't teach the children the spirit of giving. You might consider having your child do extra jobs to earn money to spend on a gift, having them use some of their allowance money, or giving up one of their own presents. Please work out a plan that is right for your family. I think this will be a wonderful project if we share a little of what we have with others who are in need. Thanks!

- Mrs. Candler

sample

Holiday Giving Project

We plan to contribute the following (check all that apply):

____ A new clothing item
____ A new toy or gift item
____ Cash (Amount: _____)
____ Wrapping paper, gift bags, boxes, ribbons, or bows (to wrap gifts)
____ Not sure but would like to participate in some way

_____ Student Name

_____ Parent's Signature

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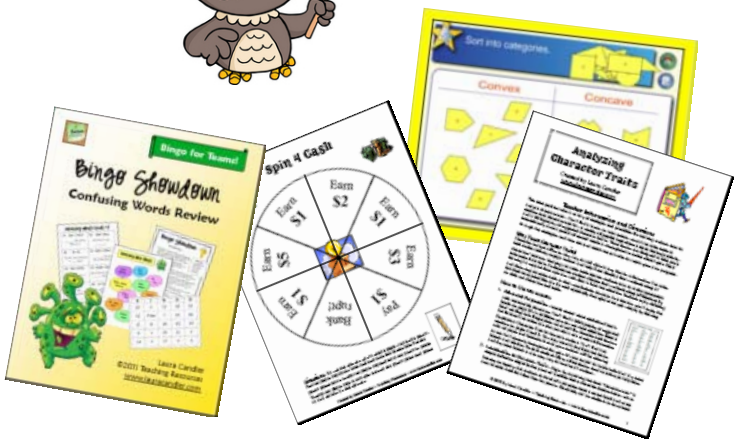

Teaching Multiple Intelligence Theory

Bingo Showdown:
Confusing Words Review

Character Bio Reports

Analyzing Character Traits

Powerful Poetry Combo

Plural Noun Showdown

Sentence Go Round

Writing Powerful Poetry

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Polygon Explorations

Polygon Explorations (Smartboard)

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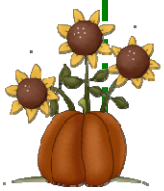
Fraction Spinner Games

Simplify and Snap Fraction Game

Order of Operations Bingo

Seasonal Teaching Packs



October

November

December

January

February (Free!)

March

April

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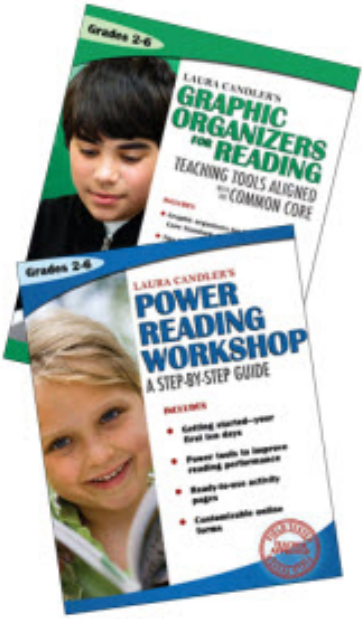

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