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The Spirit of Giving Teaching Tip

By Freda J. Glatt, M.A.

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At this holiday time, take the opportunity to teach children about the spirit of giving.

Giving takes many forms. You can give your time, such as volunteers do. You can make monetary, clothing or other donations to organizations in which you believe. You can give of yourself when you provide a hug, a listening ear, or anything else someone may need. How can you practice giving at school and at home?

1. Brainstorm ideas as to how young children CAN make a difference. All too often, they think they are too young to matter. The earlier they become involved in giving, the better the chance they will become giving, caring members of society.
2. Visit a nursing home or assisted living facility. Perhaps your students can perform a little skit or sing holiday songs. Instead of visiting, your children can make cards, poems, or stories to send. If you want to carry this further, have them practice addressing an envelope and adding a stamp.
3. Think about children in the hospital. What would make them happy? Could you collect little goodies to put in socks and have them delivered?
4. Many organizations are collecting new toys to give children for the holidays. What about collecting your students' OLD stuffed animals, board games, and books, AS LONG AS THEY ARE IN GOOD CONDITION, and give them to family shelters, local libraries, or whatever group would take them. Check, first, to see where you will be able to donate them. Children will learn the valuable lesson that giving does not mean something has to be expensive! It will also correlate with a Social Studies unit on reusing items rather than throwing them away.
5. As classes are making gifts for their families, what about the custodial, kitchen, and office staffs? Is there something you can make for them? After all, it does take a team to make a school run smoothly!

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6. Have primary students write and illustrate cards to give to intermediate students. The older pupils can then share their own holiday poems or stories with them.

7. After receiving a present, have your children write a thank-you note or make a phone call to say, "Thank you!" to the giver. Not only will that simple act show good manners, but it will provide an opportunity to reinforce written or oral communication skills.

I hope these ideas are useful and have inspired your own creative thinking. And remember...Reading is FUNdamental!!

Freda J. Glatt retired from teaching after a 34-year career in early childhood and elementary

education. Her focus, now, is to reach out and help others reinforce reading comprehension and develop a love for reading. Visit her site at <http://www.sandralreading.com>. Reading is FUNdamental!

What Do You Want This Year?

By Angie Dixon

Christmas is all around us, and many people are making up wish lists. Those who aren't doing that are busy setting down their New Year's Resolutions already. But this is a good time to sit down and do some serious introspection.

What do you want from the holidays this year? Do you want to rush around, spend a lot of money you don't have, and yell at the kids for not playing with all twenty of the toys they asked for--at the same time? Is that really how you want to spend Christmas?

We talk about "Christmas spirit," and mostly we mean giving. Giving of ourselves, giving to people who need it. That's great, that's Christmas spirit.

But I think there's another aspect to "Christmas spirit." I think it's spiritual. And don't close your screen on me because I said spiritual. I didn't say religious, because it's not. I think it comes from our souls.

I think deep down, each of us has a spirit that wants to be expressed. And I think at Christmas, when we're naturally thinking of others, that spirit is more easily expressed. I think if you want to, you can have a spiritual Christmas. You can feel loving, caring, generous. You can feel like a kid at Christmas, just by opening up to your spirit.

So what do you want this year?

Angie Dixon helps small business owners get their acts together. She is a personal development coach specializing in helping people integrate their home and work lives so they feel less stretched and more balanced. Get her FREE EBOOK on balance at

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to discover how coaching can change your life, contact Angie at

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