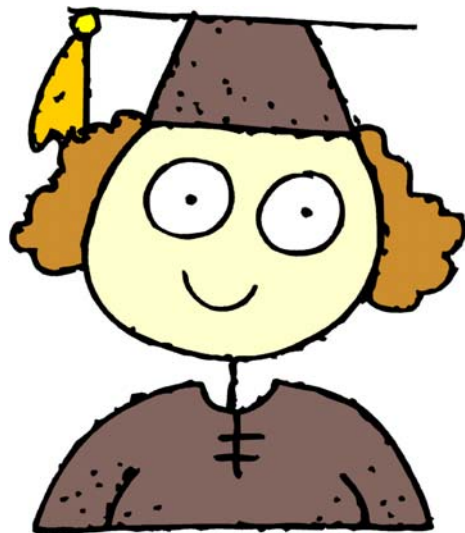


The End of the Year



Compiled by Jean Roberts
Primary Success Publications

Poems for the end of the year:

Dear _____,
You are a very special person,
And, _____, you should know,
How I loved to be your teacher,
How fast the year did go!
Please come back to visit me
As through the grades you grow,
Try hard to learn all that you can
There is so much to know!
One thing I tried to teach you
To last your whole life through,
Is to know that you are special
Just because, _____, you are you!
Love, Ms _____

I'm glad I was your teacher
I've come to love you so.
The year now ends and we must part.
Always know you're in my heart!
Have a wonderful vacation....
Remember to come visit me next year!
Love, Mrs. _____

I started in September
So cute and small,
And through the months
I've grown so tall.

Look at my portraits,
And you will see
How much I've grown,
My pictures and ME!

It's time to say good-bye.
Our year has come to an end.
We've made more cherished memories
And many more new friends.
I've watched your children learn and grow
And change from day to day
I hope that all the things we've done
Have helped in some small way.
So it's with happy memories
I send them out the door,
With great hope and expectations
For what next year holds in store!



On the back of the card, I printed (on the computer) the name of the school, school year (2002-2003), name of the class (if applicable) and teacher's name. It's a nice keepsake!

Here's a poem you'd love to get. But if you have your own children with special teachers.....

I bet you've tied a million shoes,
And dried a million tears,
And given out a million hugs,
As a teacher through the years,
The role you've played in my child's life
Has been a priceless part
And you should know the special place
She holds you in her heart.

At the beginning of September
You came into my class,
How well I remember.
Some of you were smiling
And giggling a lot.
Some were very quiet -
A few tears I could spot.
You came here to learn,
To be taught how to read,
You were then very much
Like a tiny new seed.
You were all in my garden
Just waiting to grow,
So this gardener got busy
With her rake and her hoe.
I fed you the water
And let in the sun,
You took in the soil,
But we had only begun.
Each day as I worked
In this garden of mine,
I saw you all growing
So strong and so fine.
Then finally one day
I took a good look
And saw each of my flowers
Reading a book.
It was obvious then
That you had worked, too,
Soaking up all the food
I had given to you.

But although you have blossomed,
You still need to grow
So I'll pass you on now
To another gardener I know.
She too has a rake
And hoe she can use
And plenty of food
From which you can choose.
I hope you will keep
Your roots open wide
Take in all her food
And keep it inside
Yes, a gardener can work
All night and all day
But the flower must be willing
To take in each ray.
So work very hard
In your garden each year
Do the best you can
And you'll have nothing to fear.
Grow strong and tall,
Reach up for the sun
Stay as nice as you are
And have lots of fun!

I'm glad I was your teacher.
I've come to love you so.
I can't believe the end is here.
I hate to see you go.

Remember all the fun we had
And all the things we did.
But most of all remember...
You're a VERY SPECIAL KID!



Friends

The nicest part of being in school
Is not the books you take;
It's not the crayons or the paints,
But all the friends you make.



There are so many things I wish for you.
I wish you sunshine.
I wish you umbrellas when it rains.
I wish you flowers, and birds singing, and
butterflies waving.
I wish you toasty warm toes in winter.
I wish you pizza with extra cheese.

I wish you beanbags and books.
I wish you smiles and giggles.
I wish you rainbows.
I wish you love.
Be happy, my wonderful children.
Be happy, superstars!

Ready For Grade Two

(Tune: Whole World in His Hands)

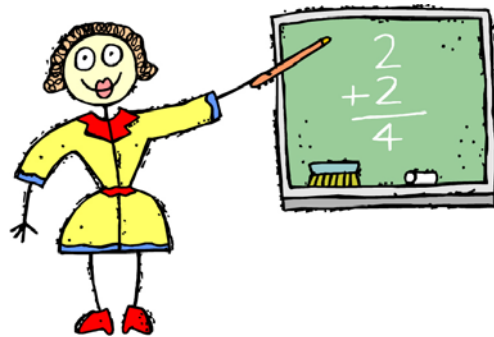
We had a great year - in grade one
A really great year - in grade one
We had a great year - in grade one
Now we are ready for grade two!

We learned to read books - in grade one
We learned to write stories - in grade one
We learned to spell words - in grade one
Now we are ready for grade two!

We learned to count real high - in grade one
We learned to add and subtract - in grade one
We learned to measure and graph - in grade one
Now we are ready for grade two!

We liked _____ - in grade one
We liked _____ - in grade one
We liked _____ - in grade one
Now we are ready for grade two!

We had a great year - in grade one
A really great year - in grade one
We had a great year - in grade one
Now we are ready for grade two!



June Activities



Special Days in May/June

These are ideas to do during the last 26 Days of School.

A - Animal Day, bring your favourite stuffed animal - write stories, graph the animals, etc.

B - Backwards Day, wear your clothes backwards - or- Bubbles Day: blow bubbles and learn the science of bubbles. Do speech bubbles.

C - Card Day, make a card for someone at the nursing home - or - Cartoon Day - draw and write a comic strip using speech bubbles. Read comic strips.

D - Dinosaur Day - we eat dinosaur snacks, and generally enrich our dinosaur knowledge!

E - Elephant Day - read books, write stories - or - eEstimation Day - we have a series of estimation projects. Some are treats in jars which we eat, of course.

F - Friend Day - or - a field trip, or a funny day - tell jokes, read funny stories, write something funny

G - Game Day, bring one from home to play - or Green Day. Wear green, paint green pictures, do math with green manipulatives, brainstorm things that are green

H - Hat Day, wear your favourite hat

I - Icky Day - worms, slime, make oobleck

J - Jacks Day, learn how to play - or - the Jungle - rainforest and jungle stuff!

K - Kite Day - make kites and fly them - or - Kitchen Day - cooking, and reading recipes

L - Lollipop Day - ! How many licks until your lollipop is gone?

M - Movie Day - or - Mothers and Manners! This will be mom's special day at school. Show your manners at the Mother's Day Tea. It could also be Music Day.

N - Nifty Word Day! Who can bring in the strangest word, longest word, most interesting word, hardest to spell word?

O - Orange Day - collect orange things - eat oranges

P - Puzzle Day, bring a puzzle from home to do at school - or - Popsicle Day.

Q - Quiet Day - or - Quilt Day -A Quiet Quilt Day! Make a paper friendship quilt, very quietly.

R - Reading Day - wear pj's, bring favourite book and read, read, read!

S - Sundae Day, yum - or - Sports Day - have a mini-Olympics

T - T shirt Day, wear your favourite T-Shirt. Design a t-shirt.

U - Unusual Shades Day, wear your craziest sunglasses - or - do unusual things.

V - Vacation Day! Camp out in the classroom, read in a little backyard pool, wear shorts and sunglasses.

W - Watermelon Day, another yum - or - Walking Day. Go for a long walk.

X - Xtra Xcitement Day, cheer on your school - perhaps have a special movie or treat.

Y - You Choose Day - Yellow Day - or - Yummy Day! Brainstorm favourite foods, have a pizza lunch and ice cream sundaes.

Z - Zoom Out of School and Zip into Summer Day!

End of the Year Count Down:

"This eye-catching display guarantees that the last week of school will be filled with surprises. Label each of five paper strips with an end-of-the-year surprise, such as lunch outdoors, a popcorn party, or a video. Place each strip inside a balloon; then inflate the balloons. On a bulletin board, display a character cut-out holding five balloon strings. Title the display 'Let's End the Year With a Bang!' Attach the inflated balloons to the ends of the strings. Pop a balloon each morning of the last five school days and enjoy the resulting surprise that day. Pop goes the year!"

"To perk up the last 6 weeks of the school year, we do 'Alphabet Days! We are starting May 1. We do one letter each day. Sometimes we put two letters together on one day, if time becomes limited. We usually ask the parents to send in \$2.00 to cover the cost of all the treats, etc."

Keeping Them Busy!

"Here are some things I'm doing to keep everyone busy and out of trouble as the year comes to an end:

- 1,000 books - Children have special bound books with grids in which they write to 1,000, 100 to a page. This has become a highlight of the end of the year. It seems every year my kindergarteners (I have K-1, same students for two years) ask when they'll begin their 1,000 books. I make it sound like a grade one privilege to receive a 1,000 book.

- Accelerated Reader - My k's and l's are busy trying to accumulate points for prizes the last day. If you don't have accelerated reader you could have a little comprehension sheet with about five questions they have to answer after they've read the book and give them points for correct answers.

- Lots of science - we're 'growing' crystals with water and salt. Wrap a pipe cleaner around a pencil. Fill up the jar with warm water and about 1/4 cup salt, add food colouring and watch. Due to evaporation, the crystals form on the jar and pipe cleaner. We get our magnifying glasses out each day and check the progress.

- We're also growing plants and go out to water them each day. We set them outside our window so we can take a little hike outside.

- We've made autograph books for the children to sign for each other.

- Reading outside. I'm doing my reading groups outside.

- The teachers have a softball game between themselves and the kids get to go out and cheer.

We're going to the airport and museum on Friday.

We're going to the movies on the last day of school (Monday) and coming back with a sack lunch and will be having games outside.

Here are a few things I have planned to celebrate our year together. We are bringing a favourite book from home, a corresponding snack to share with a partner, beach towels and pillows and have a reading picnic outside. Examples of book and corresponding snacks are : If You Give a Moose a Muffin - bring two muffins, Swimmy - bring goldfish crackers, The Very Hungry Caterpillar - bring fruit.

Also, we will bring gel pens to sign autograph books. The autograph books have 25 or so poems printed. We read one poem together, then we sign the book and pass the book to the right. Poems in the book are like these:

2 Y's UR
2 Y's UB
I C UR
2 Y's 4 me.

_____ (sign)



Pals we are,
Pals we'll be,
Pals forever,
You and me.

_____ (sign)

"Throughout the year we write each day on a topic using a word web. During the last few weeks we use each child as the topic for the day. Each day everyone writes positive things about one child. I then bind their writing papers into a book for that child to keep as a remembrance of the friends in our class."

"I make little autograph books. I model a few silly autographs and then let them give it a try. They give each other their autograph and add a little picture of some sort to go with it. It takes anywhere from half an hour to 45 min. Later in the day we clean our desktops with shaving cream. Quick, easy, and lots of fun on the last day."

End of the Year Presentation

"I'm doing my end of year presentation on Friday. I've decided to call it Poetry Pizazz. Music and Munchies didn't seem quite right and we're going to have cake and punch for refreshments. I made a poster with Printshop and sent it home as an invitation. We will be reciting poems and singing some songs for our parents. We went through our poetry books and chose our favourites. Then 3 or 4 kids 'signed up' to say that poem. They worked as little groups and divided them up into parts. In between the poems we will sing our songs - favourites, too - from our good morning song to our graduation song. (*We had a great year in grade one.....!*)"

"After our presentation I will say a few words about how fabulous and supportive the parents have been. Then we will have cake and punch. I will buy a cake from the bakery. After - just for something completely different - we will have a soccer-baseball (kickball) game with our parents joining in. One of our songs is actually '*Take me out to the Ballgame!*'"

End-of-the-year themes:

Do a bubble mini-theme: Buy each student their own little bottle of bubbles. Go outside and have a great end of the year by blowing bubbles. Learn about the science of bubbles.

Have an end of the year picnic. Make plans and write lists.

Have a drawing day. Use sidewalk chalk to draw on the sidewalks.

Do a camping theme - put up a tent in the classroom, learn about the forest, etc.

Have an insect theme and spend time outdoors learning about insects.

Have an ice-cream day - read the recipe, measure ingredients, make it and eat, of course!

Remember the Year!

"I gave my children a beach ball with 'We had a ball in Ms. _____'s kindergarten' written on it and then we sat in a circle and passed the balls around until everyone had signed them. This went along with a booklet that we made that said the same thing and listed our favourites... my favourite center was, my favourite math activity was, my favourite story was _____, my best friend was, etc. The I put them both in a bag that said 'Kindergarten was a ball!' and sent it home the last day."

This year I made a keepsake card for each child. Using tagboard I used my computer to print a cute picture on the front with the child's name. On the inside top fold was a picture of the child and me. On the inside bottom flap was a poem."

"I have done a yearbook every year. I put each child's name on a piece of paper that I have done on the computer and make books with everyone's page in it, including the teacher's. Then I put on their pictures and copy them. I staple it and they write end of the year notes to everyone. I also include a couple of memory pages for them to reflect back on the year. It can be done as simple or as detailed as you want."

"During the year I take a large number of pictures - digital - of the kidlets. I save them until the 2nd week of June and using Photoshop I make a slideshow for showing at the end of the school year. Parents are invited and I find suitable sappy music like Whitney Houston - *I believe the children are the future*, Irish Rovers - *Years May Come, Years may Go*, etc. We'll maybe do an Ice-cream Social this year - I'm not sure yet. Then our Tech guy copies the CD for as many people that want copies. I put the CD in the Library."

Photo Memories

"I make a little photo album for each of my kids at the end of the year. I take pictures all year long with the digital camera and usually try to have at least 2 children in each picture. I print out the pictures and cut construction paper slightly larger than the photos and glue them on with a little caption - maybe just the date or what they were doing at the time or who's in the picture. It ends up being a lot of work at the end but if I got myself more organized I could be doing it all along through the year. I try to have 4-6 pictures of each child and I slip the album into their report card so they get a nice surprise when they go home and open the envelope."

We Had a Ball!

"Buy an inflatable beach ball for each student in your class. Blow up each ball and using a broadtip marker, write "We had a ball in Grade One, Mrs. ____'s class, etc." along with the student's name. Then sign it yourself, and allow the students to have their friends autograph their ball with a Sharpie marker. Give them time to play with the balls before having to put them up. For transporting purposes, you might want to provide a bag with "Have a ball this summer!" printed on the outside and the date. Have the students deflate their ball and transport them in the bag."

Memory Books

This is a great project for June. The children can do writing and art to add to their books.

Now that digital cameras are easy to use and affordable, memory books are easy to make for your kids. Here are some ideas. These are possible pages - pick and choose the ones you want.

Cover Page - Memories of Grade One 2002 - 2003 and the child's name

The cover can be photocopied on light cardboard, and another sheet for the back. The completed book can be bound on a binding machine or simply stapled.

A class photo and the class members' names in the order of the children in the photo so they can be matched in later years.

Memories of my school

The name of my school is _____. (photo of outside of building)

This is my classroom. (photo)

This is my favourite place in the school. (drawing or photo)

This place is special because _____.

Memories of my teacher

My teacher's name is _____. (photo)

My teacher likes to _____.

I like my teacher because _____.

Memories of my friends

My best friends are _____ and _____.

This is me with my friends. (drawing)

Memories of my classmates

(Individual photos of the children in the class.)

Special events

(Photos or drawings of the child during special events throughout the year. The child may write a couple of sentences to describe each.)

Handprint

This can be done by painting the child's hand and then pressing it to the paper.

Self-portrait

Draw a careful picture. You might want to use self-portraits from the beginning of the year and the end.

Favourite things

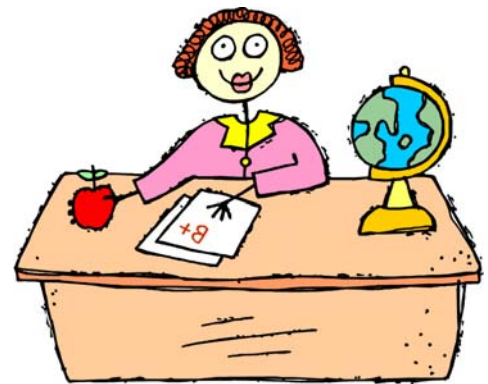
(Have the children all write on this subject and sign their name on a good copy. Photocopy these into the book. You can type them up or use the children's copies.)

Autographs

(The students can sign a page.)

Samples

Samples of art, stories, or special work.



End of the Year Souvenirs:

"I had my students complete a souvenir booklet of their favourites. The booklet was in the shape of a beach ball that I made using a graphics program. I printed out the front and back cover in color so that it looked like a beach ball. The title was "I Had a Ball in Mrs. ____'s Class!" The inside pages I programmed with:

- My favourite class was ...
- My favourite center was ...
- My favourite friend was ...
- I learned ...
- My favourite thing that we did was ...
- I will miss ...
- Autographs ...

All the pages were cut out and stapled together to form a beach ball shape book. This booklet went in the bag with their beach balls. This project was a LOT of work, but the enjoyment that my students got out of it was well worth it!"



"I am a scrapbooker. Last year I made a scrapbook for my class. All year I took pictures of the students working on projects in class and at special events (i.e. the release of our butterflies, field trips, the Winter Program, Field Day, etc...) It wasn't inexpensive, but I love scrapbooking, so I justified it to myself. I made 1 page for each student (3-5 pictures on each page) and a few pages of fun activities we did in class. Then I photocopied it in black and white on the 'photo' setting for clarity. I made a cute cover on construction paper, laminated it and bound it with the school binder. The kids loved them. I also put a blank autograph page in the back so they could sign each other's books. This summer I bought a digital camera and I'm saving all their pictures on my hard drive so I don't have boxes of pictures to go through in May when I put this thing together."

"I make each child an autograph book. I take pictures of the kids and arrange four of the pictures on a page with space under each picture. The kids can decorate their covers. At the end of the year, they write a message under their picture in each book. It's easy to tell if you missed someone because the space under their picture is empty. Be sure to include a picture of yourself."

When your class picture gets taken, make sure you sent home a list of the children's names matching the picture. This could be glued on the back or attached with a staple or paperclip. Years from now many of the names will be forgotten without this reminder!

More Memory Books

"I put together a memory book for the end of the year. I take random pictures of the class to highlight some of the special events and activities during the year. After April vacation I use them during Writing Workshop once a week as a writing project for our classroom memories of special events. Each child gets a picture that they are in and is asked to write about the activity. I take this writing activity from sloppy copy to final revised/edited copy with each student. I publish it with the picture glued on top and place these pages in the back of the Memory Book pages we have worked on all year. By year's end we have about two or three completed. Any extra pictures get glued in the back like a scrap book and the kids are asked to 'title' each picture as if it was a story. Lots of language, writing and fun! The kids really like it."

"Make booklets for each student. On the cover use the caption 'Wow! What A Year!' and a cute graphic or have students draw their own picture. 'My Memory Book', name, date, school, etc.

Each page will contain a reflection of their year in grade one.

Have the students write several sentences and make a picture using some or all of these starters, or come up with you own.

i.e. My fondest memory..... The funniest thing that happened..... My teacher wasMy best friend was..... My favourite book was I felt proud when.....

My favourite subject was..... My favourite day was when

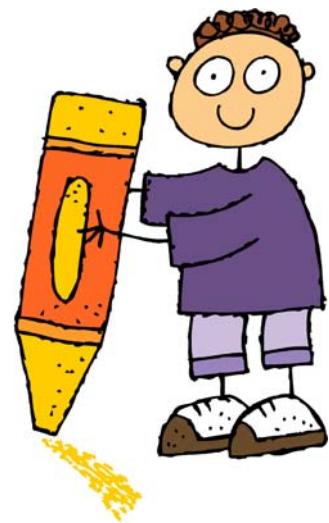
Do them in centers, as journals or a page a day. Bind with spiral binding and it becomes a real keeper!"

"I put together a Memory Book for the kids at the end of grade one. My pages are:

1. My first day of grade one (with a photo I took of each child on the first day)
2. A poem and hand print of each child taken the first month of school
3. My teacher (child draws a picture of me and I print my name)
4. I learned so much in *Grade One* (a page for the kids to write on)
5. I made a lot of friends in *Grade One*. We had a lot of fun together. (write about friends and draw a picture)
6. Fill in the blank page of different favourite things done in our classroom.
7. Now I am ___ years old. I will be in *Grade Two*. In *Grade Two* I will: (writing activity and photo of each child)
8. I'm glad I was your teacher poem. (picture of child with me)
9. Goodbye letter from me.

More Ideas

"You might want to have everyone bring in a clean, white t-shirt and let everyone sign it, as a remembrance for each student. You also may want to give everyone a sticker, pencil or little note from you telling them to have a nice summer. If you find a pad of paper that is shaped like a light bulb or a clip art of a light bulb you could write 'I'll be thinking of you this summer!' and tell each child one thing you liked/admired about them this year and one thing you think they should work on during the summer to prepare them for next year."



"I go to the grocery store and get enough brown paper bags (with handles, if possible) for each student to have one. We spend one day decorating with crayons, markers, whatever else we can find, reflecting on what we did in the past year. Some kids get all of their friends signatures, phone numbers, etc. This is the bag that they use to clean out their desks, cubbies, lockers, etc. If you can get the ones with handles, they are easy to carry. On the last day of school, my kids leave with all of their stuff and memories of the year."

Gifts for your children

Summer Survival Kit:

A cup of goodies just for you!

This cup is for you from me with love. Inside I have put some treats that you can use this summer. A piece of sidewalk chalk for this summer when you need something to do (be sure to ask your parents where it's ok to draw!)

A Band-Aid for one of those summer ouches!

Hugs and Kisses for those times you need them!

A pencil and eraser to practice writing over the summer.

A postcard with my address on it so you can write me sometime this summer to let me know how you are and what fun things you have been doing.

A summer reading log and bookmark... return the completed log to me in August and receive something special!

Have a wonderful vacation, remember to come visit me next year. Enclosed is a coupon that you can return to me next year for a free trip to the Treasure Chest!

Summer Review:

Send home the 'Primary Success' calendars for July and August.

Contact 'Primary Success' for a list of 98 summer activities! It can be sent to you by e-mail.

Homemade Sidewalk Chalk:

Small Dixie Cups

2-3 tbsp. liquid Tempera Paint

Plaster of Paris

1/2 cup water

Mix tempera paint and water and add Plaster of Paris until creamy. Pour into cups and let harden for about 24 hours. Once it has hardened, peel away paper cup and write away!



A Picture to Remember

"Here is a cute end-of-the-year idea: I xerox the children's school pictures and run a copy off for each child. They decorate the edges of a large piece of white construction paper like a frame and cut and paste all the children's pictures into the center. Then, they get signatures and phone numbers under each photo. I also make a title like 'My Grade One Class 2000' which they cut and paste on the paper."

End of the Year Certificates

"I always do certificates. I make them on the computer, of course! I try to think of characteristics of each child so mine are not strictly academic. Biggest smile, Most Helpful, Happiest Face, etc. Its hard to do the best in an academic area, because so many of my kids do equally as well. Sometimes I have to get pretty creative. One year I had a little girl who slept most of the year and I just couldn't come up with anything. Finally my aide suggested quietest! It fit! My end of the year gift is usually a class picture that I take myself and frame. A lot of the Grade One teachers are making really nice memory books for each student, but I never seem to have the time for that!"

"One thing I've done in the past is write an acrostic poem for each student in my class using their first name and print it on special paper. I add a photo of them on top and I slip it in with the end of the year report card.

Sure has a great smile
Always willing to help out
Respects others
Artistic student
Hard working girl

"Some teachers recognize each student in their class for some kind of accomplishment at the end of the year. You can make your own awards at several sites on the 'net. They could say something like: This award is presented to _____ for _____. (There are some awards at <http://www.janbrett.com>)

Some possibilities for awards:

Honours in Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies

Bookworms

Perfect Attendance

Honourable mention in Attendance (no more than 3 days missed)

Christmas Concert - all who participate

Science Fair - all who enter at the school level

Track and Field - all who participate

Principal's Choice

Neatness

Classroom Helper

Running Club - all who participate

Reading Club - all who participate

Reading Club Excellence

Penmanship - neatest printing or handwriting

Creative Writing - story writing

Art



More possibilities for awards are:

Computer Whiz, Great Sportsmanship, Stick-to-It Award, Class Bookworm, Always Helpful, Beautiful Handwriting, Most Cooperative, Creative Writer, Excellent Artist, Excellent Thinking, Great Participation, Brightest Smile, Hardest Working, Best Boy Athlete, Best Girl Athlete, Outstanding Behaviour, Most Improved _____, Excellence in _____ (subject area), Most Improved in _____ (subject area), True Friend, Math Problem Solver, Most Responsible, Wonderful Singing, Happy Attitude, Dependability, Sharing, Politeness, Citizenship, Academic, Achievement, Perfect Attendance, Most Attentive, Neatness

"I like this system as we don't have to come up with a unique award for each student, all students will receive a certificate and just the stickers are different. And as I said we try to ensure all students have enough to make the certificate look nice. When they have less we just spread them out more over the certificate."

"At the end of the year, I like to design and print out (or buy and fill out) certificates for each child. They usually say: This award is presented to _____ for _____. You made Mrs. Harris's class special!

These are some of the 'special' reasons these awards are given:

Your Bright Smile
Hardest Worker
Best Boy - Girl Athlete
Outstanding Behavior
Most Improved Behavior
Excellence in Science (and Math, Reading, Spelling, Writing)
Most Improved in Math, etc.
Being a True Friend
Math Problem Solver
Most Responsible
Wonderful Singing
Happy Attitude
Always Dependable
Always Sharing, Always Polite
Computer Whiz
Great Sportsmanship
Stick-to-It Award (or Never Give Up)
Class Bookworm, Always Helpful
Beautiful handwriting
Most Cooperative
Creative Writer, Excellent Artist
Excellent Thinking
Great Participation



patience, perseverance
curiosity, humor, courage
integrity, friendship
respect, responsibility
initiative, flexibility
Bookworm
Outstanding Organizer
Most Cheerful, Teacher's Helper
Brightest smile, Best messenger
Best Lineleader
Most artistic
Best Manners, Hardest Worker
Best Handwriting
Best at Colouring
Most Improved Reader
Most Expressive Reader
Most Dependable, Most Helpful
Most Improved Handwriting
Friendliest
Most creative story-teller
Nicest smile
Tidy Desk Award
Awesome Artist
Super Speller

A Last Day Project

"Have your kids each write a page of a classroom book that you will read to your new class on the first day of school next year. Here is an example:

Dear Grade One students,
My name is _____ and I was in _____'s class for Grade One.
I learned to _____ and _____. My favourite subject was _____.
Have a good year in Grade One.
From,

"I had each child illustrate their page. The book was adorable. The new class enjoyed reading it as much as the others enjoyed sharing their wisdom."

For your Volunteers

"This is a little poem we use at our volunteer appreciation tea at the end of the year. It's printed in a pretty font and then the children make thumbprint faces and sign their names as a border around the poem. Enough copies are made from the main page for all of the parents. They are mounted on colored paper and laminated. This always seems to be a hit because the children say the poem and then present it and say 'thank you'.

You've been so very good to us.
You've been kind in every way.
You've made us special treats and helped
On all our special days.
Today we'd like to thank you
For all you've done this year,
And to tell you that you're special
And so very, very dear.
Today we'd like to tell you
In our own special way:
We appreciate the things you've done
More than words can say.



Because You're Special

We sometimes take for granted
In the rush of all we do,
And forget to say a special thanks
To parents/volunteers like you!
So we send this message to tell you
How much all you do means,
Your gifts of time and of yourself
Are special ones indeed.

A school is more than books and desks
And learning two plus two
It's people who share their skills and care,
And try their best in all they do.
Please accept our heartfelt appreciation.
Our school's a better place
Because of your dedication.

The Volunteer is one with a heart so sincere.
No task too large, no task too small,
Who will help with anything at all.
Who will be there in the morning light,
Or help in the dark of night.
The Volunteer, our extra hand,
On whose future our Children Stand.
Never anyone so dear as a <Your School's Name>
Volunteer !

"I always have the kids write 'thank you' letters to parents who have volunteered a lot. Then I bind them into a book. The last page is a letter from me. We put the child's school picture at the bottom of their letter. The cover is a few photos of the parent's child. Then the last time the parent volunteers in our room, I have the kids each read their letter to the parent."

Attach a note to a bag of mixed nuts, stating 'We would go nuts without your support.'

Paint terra-cotta pots for volunteers. On the rim of the pot, paint 'Thank you for helping us grow.' Inside, place packets of flower seeds and a certificate. Tie raffia around the top and deliver the pots to volunteers.

Wrap votive candles in cellophane and tie them with ribbon, attaching a note stating 'You light up the lives of so many!' and 'You lighten our load by volunteering!'

"I like to give my volunteers a large card that the children have all signed, with a class photo on the cover. I add a long-stemmed rose."

"At our school, we do a school-wide volunteer appreciation assembly. Each class is responsible for reciting a short verse or singing a short appropriate song... we award each volunteer a nice certificate, and then they are treated to refreshments out on our teacher patio... fresh fruit, Danish and punch. The children have an extra long recess that day, so that the teachers can attend the tea. It is very nice."

Possible gifts for volunteers

Attach a note to a bag of mixed nuts, stating 'We would go nuts without your support.'

To a small container of Play-Doh, attach a label that says 'Thank you for making a commitment to shape the future of our _____ program!'

Tie a note to a pair of sunglasses with colourful ribbon - on the note, print a special message to include the person's first name, followed by 'Thank you for all your work as _____. Your leadership and energy have helped to make our _____ so bright we gotta wear shades!'

Paint terra-cotta pots to give to volunteers. On the rim of the pot, paint 'Thank you for helping us grow.' Inside, place packets of flower seeds and a certificate. Tie a few strings of raffia around the top and deliver the pots to volunteers!

Wrap votive candles in cellophane and tie them with ribbon, attaching a note stating 'You light up the lives of so many!' and 'You lighten our load by volunteering!'

Tape/staple or attach a small plastic toy dinosaur to a round circle of coloured construction paper, on which is printed 'Dinomite job! Thank you for all you do!'

"I like to give my volunteers a large card that the children have all signed, with a class photo on the cover. I add a long-stemmed rose."

"We have lots of parent helpers that come in during the year. I made 8 1/2 x 11 cards, spelling out 'Thank You', and then lined the students up with 9 children in the front row. This front row of students hold the cards. Then I took a class picture and put in a frame for each volunteer."

"Last year I got gift certificates from a bakery. I put them with a jar of honey that said, 'Thanks for being such a honey to help this year.'"

"I sometimes give my volunteers a small plant, a gift certificate to the local video store or book store, or some little thing I have made myself (if I have time!). This all depends on how many volunteers I have."

"Another nice idea is for tickets to a local attraction, Imax theatre, etc., zoo or museum."

"I usually buy a canvas tote bag at Walmart and silk screen it or a canvas apron and have the children write on it with fabric paint."

"I get really nice plant pots, buy some thyme and plant it in the pot attaching a card that says 'Thank you for your thyme!' Last year I also did a scrapbook page. I got 8 x 10 frames and put pictures of that person's child in a collage and printed on the computer "Grade One" (used a cool graphic that said this) and put it on a colourful piece of cardstock, put it in the frame and it was a nice gift. Parents loved it!"



Retiring Staff Members

"Our principal retired at the end of last school year. In addition to the gift we gave her, we bought a journal and each faculty/staff member wrote a personal note/reflection in it. She told that those notes mean more to her than any gift ever could. We made a memory book by writing letters to her and collecting photographs."

Retiring Teacher Survival Kit

Lifesaver - to remind you of the number of times you've come to the rescue

Glitter - to make your life sparkle

Penny - so you won't have to say you're broke

String - to help you tie up loose ends

Battery - because you're just like the Energizer bunny - you keep going, and going, and going

Mint - because you're worth a mint to us

Another coin - to toss when you have a choice to make - get up now or sleep 'til 10...

Marker - To thank you for leaving a lasting impression

Marbles - to replace the ones you've lost over the years.

A hug - to remember those little hugs!

"Each child in your class can draw a little picture and write what the teacher could do with all her 'free time'. *When you retire you can _____*. The kids usually come up with great ideas."

"My class helped to write a book based on 'That's good...that's bad' when our principal retired. It went something like this:

Did you hear that _____ is retiring? That's good, because now he can play golf every day, but that's bad because we won't get to see his colourful ties as we enter the building. But it's good because he can spend time with _____ (his grandchildren), but that's bad because now the children in our building won't get to see him. But that's good because _____.

The children helped to think of things. It turned out cute. You could put clip art on each page or have the children illustrate it."



Retiring Principal

"When our principal retired, we gave each student in the school a piece of paper to write some advice on. They were quite comical! One student actually suggested that she (the principal) 'Could get a real job like working at McDonald's now!'"

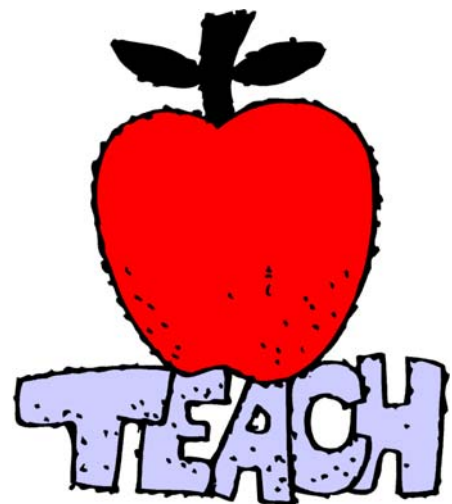
"I did this for a retiring guidance counselor. I gave each child a small sticky note and had them draw a head shot of the counselor. I then stuck these all around the border of plain white paper. I ran these off on the copy machine. Voila - instant (very!) personal stationary. You could make them into a tablet or tie the stack with a pretty ribbon or put the stack in a pretty box."

"When my principal retired when I was back in elementary school, my class made up a song and sang it for him at an all-school assembly in his honor. He loved it and it brought tears to his eyes because it was created especially for him by some of his students. We created different lyrics about everything that occurred at the school during the years that he was there, and also different reasons why he was so special to all of us. It was definitely a success!"

"Last year for our former principal's retirement we did several different things. Each class made a book, each teacher wrote a letter and this was included in a faculty/staff scrapbook along with photos (very time consuming for those on that committee, but very sentimental), surprise catered cookout, with her family invited and each grade level presented a skit in her honor at the cookout. The biggie gift for a retiring teacher is a silver tray, but we gave her a string of pearls."

And for yourself.....

"Remember to rest and do something for yourself during your time off. I like the analogy of how airline passengers traveling with children are instructed to put their own masks on first in case of oxygen problems and to THEN put it on the children traveling with them. If the adult loses consciousness, then the child has no one to help. I see these vacations as the same thing. We teachers need to take care of ourselves during this period because our kids need us to come back refreshed and ready to give them all we have to give."





Think about next year!

Go to www.primarysuccess.ca and look under the 'Freebies' link for beginning of the new year ideas.

Don't forget to order your homework calendars for next year!

Have a great summer and a well-deserved rest....

Jean

