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The Cluttered Desk

Volume 2 Issue 6

"In teaching it is the method and not the content that is the message." – Ashley Montague

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FEATURE ARTICLE

'Twas the Day Before Christmas

By Christopher Norman

"'Twas the day before Christmas,
And all through the school,
The children had broken
Almost every last rule!

They wiggled and giggled
Like mischievous imps,
I swore that my class
Had been raided by chimps!

They had all worked so hard
For the entire first term,
Taking their lessons
With nary a squirm.

But as closer to Christmas
We crept everyday,
They forgot about work
They wanted to play!

They competed to see
Who could be the worst pest,
And in the middle of class
Held a belching contest.

The boys picked on girls,
The girls picked on boys,

It all added up
To incredible noise.

When I thought they'd improve,
They just threw me a curve,
Hammering upon
My very last nerve.

And finally the day
Of the party had come,
Not a moment too soon
For my brain had gone numb.

Vacation was near,
A reprieve from attack,
And I wasn't quite sure
If I'd even come back.

As I wearily waited
For the end of the day,
I heard a loud voice
Call out to me "HEY!"

"I'll see you next year!"
And he smiled "Don't you get it?
The year ends this month!"
He would give me no credit.

Oh, he was the worst,
Always wanting to play,
But something was different
About him today.

"I have something for you,
But it's really not much.
I couldn't afford
Nice presents and such.

Then he pulled from his pocket
A hand-written letter.
"It's all I could get,
Though a card would be better."

I opened his note
With some sense of dread,
But I couldn't believe
The words that I read.

"You're the best teacher
That I've ever had,
Though I know there are times
That I must make you mad..

You make me feel smart

And believe I can do it.
Class used to be hard,
Now there ain't nothin' to it.

I know that I don't
Always act like I should,
But you make me want
To try hard to be good.

When life makes me feel
Like I'm pushed and I'm shoved,
I know that with you,
At least I am loved.

And though I believe
That you've helped make me smart,
Your best gift to me
Is the gift of your heart."

I stared at the words
That he'd written down,
And I could no longer
Hold onto my frown.

Through the noise of the party,
The music and screeching,
This boy had reminded me
Why I was teaching.

I gave him a smile
And wiped up a tear.
"Merry Christmas to you,
And I'll see you next year!"

Get your free math screensavers at <http://www.justusteachers.com/screensavers.html>. No pop-ups, no advertising just fun screensavers!

RESEARCH LINKS – MATH MANIPULATIVES

How to Make the Most of Math Manipulatives – Marilyn Burns
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/lessonplans/instructor/burns.htm>

"Concrete" Manipulatives, Concrete Ideas
http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/org/buildingblocks/Newsletters/Concrete_Yelland.htm

Dispensing Materials in Fifteen Seconds
<http://teachers.net/gazette/SEP02/wong.html>

The Role of Manipulatives in Introducing and Developing Mathematical Concepts in Elementary and Middle Grades
http://www.resourceroom.net/Math/Jones_mathmanip.asp

CHRISTMAS FUN LINKS

Party Time in the Math Room – Folding Paper Activities

<http://www.successlink.org/great/g440.html>

Christmas Themed Math Pages

<http://www.kidzone.ws/math/christmas/>

Christmas Math Riddle

<http://www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/xmas/print/jokes2.gif>

Subtraction Fact Book

<http://www.abcteach.com/Christmas/subtraction.htm>

Multiplication Fact Book

<http://www.abcteach.com/Christmas/multiplication.htm>

FEATURE CHRISTMAS MATH LESSONS

12 Days of Christmas

<http://dimacs.rutgers.edu/~judyann/LP/lessons/12.days.html>

Shop Early

<http://www.successlink.org/great/g1052.html>

Christmas Shopping Extravaganza – Grades 1-2

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathArtChristmasOrnamentShoppingGoodIdea12.htm>

Twelve Days of Math (a Christmas song)

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathMusicTheTwelveDaysOfMathChristmasSongIdea2.htm>

Spreading Christmas Cheer Using Spreadsheets

<http://faculty.tamu-commerce.edu/espinoza/s/tschoerner-h-lp1.html>

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!! Do you have a lesson, link or funny story that you would like to see here? We welcome your submissions! E-mail us at ezine@justusteachers.com

Did you enjoy this issue? Pass it on to your friends and coworkers! E-mail us and let us know your thoughts! We look forward to hearing from you!

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