



Holiday Gift Baskets

Gift baskets have grown in popularity and are the favorite choice of many when it comes to giving. Gift baskets not only allow those doing the giving to personalize their gift more, but also to get more creative in the gifts themselves. Baskets are functional and many people love them and will use them well after the gift inside has been removed. However, not every recipient can or will make use of a basket. Instead of giving a gift basket with an actual basket as the basis, why not try something a bit more creative and useful to the beneficiary?

All it takes is a bit of thought and fore planning to find the perfect creative gift basket without a basket. Remember, just because you are sending a holiday gift doesn't mean the gift itself has to be just for the holidays. Here are a few ideas to help you get started on the perfect creative gift basket.

Do you know someone on your list who loves to cook? Think about some items that they'd like to receive. Instead of wrapping up a basket filled with kitchen items in cellophane paper, use a crock pot or a stock pot instead. Add a pretty bow and you're done. When they lift the lid, they can find many smaller cooking items inside.

Is dad or another man in the family an avid fisherman? Use an old-fashioned wicker tackle box to hold a bunch of fishing items. Stuff your creative gift basket full of lures, handkerchiefs, line, a coffee thermos, and anything else you think he could use on his next fishing trip. When he's ready to head out, he'll only need to grab the tackle box and his pole and he's ready to go!

When the kids want to give a gift to their teacher, you can give them the ever famous apple, candles, and other assorted gifts. Once you've decided on the gifts, instead of a basket or a gift bag, present the gifts in something they can use - a tote bag. The tote bag needs to be big enough to hold not only their gifts, but also notebooks and papers. Add a holiday card to an outer pocket or tie a string to the handle and attach the card to it wishing her a happy holiday season!

When putting together a creative gift basket, let the gifts dictate the container. With these ideas, and a few more of your own, you'll be well on your way to making someone's day. Giving gifts just got a whole lot easier and fun with a creative gift basket filled with the recipients favorite things.



*Quiz: What do you know
about... reindeers?*

- Both male & female reindeers have antlers. True or False
- A reindeer's stomach is divided into four compartments. True or False
- Reindeers graze in small areas. True or False
- Reindeers never lose their antlers. True or False

Gingerbread Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 2/3 cup light molasses or corn syrup
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 2/3 cup heavy cream
- 1 3/4 tbsp. ground ginger
- 1 tbsp. baking soda
- 6 cups flour

Directions:

Heat the sugar, molasses, and butter in a large saucepan over low heat. After the butter melts, cool mixture. Stir in cream, ginger, baking soda, and flour. Let dough stand overnight.

Preheat oven to 400*. Divide dough into thirds. Roll each piece very thin. Use a cookie cutter to cut out shapes. Bake cookies on greased cookie sheets for 5 to 7 min. Cool on a rack. Makes 7-8 doz.

This is a wonderful recipe for making gingerbread men!



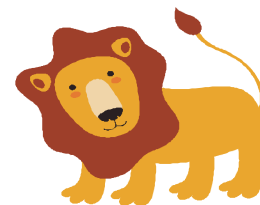
Quiz Answers:

- True – Both male & female reindeers have antlers
- True – A reindeer's stomach is divided into four compartments.
- False – Reindeers make long migrations south in the winter months for fresh grazing and north in the summer months to find shelter
- False – A reindeer's antlers are *deciduous* which means that they fall off after a specific stage of growth.





To: Miss Janice's Lions



A Lion's Tail

December 2012

Are those Sleigh Bells?

Oh yes! It's our favorite time of year....we can almost hear Santa's bells jingling already. Lion friends are in a great mood. They just love to talk about Santa and the wonderful things that he brings. At school, we will enjoy the holiday together learning about the "spirit of giving" and learning that even small acts of kindness can mean so much. In addition to our curriculum, we will sing holiday songs, decorate, share some holiday treats and participate in all kinds of merriment.

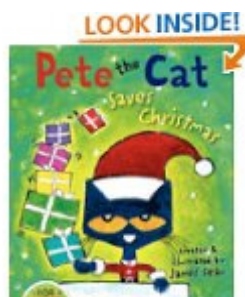
Happy Holidays to All!

The Book Nook:

Pete the Cat Saves Christmas

By James Dean

In this rockin' new spin on the traditional tale *The Night Before Christmas*, Pete the Cat proves that giving your all in the spirit of Christmas is the totally groovy thing to do.



Snowmen At Christmas

By Caralyn Buehner

A *New York Times* bestseller this favorite depicts all the best parts of the holiday, replete with icy treats and a snowman Kris Kringle. This is perfect for a snowy evening read-aloud.



Holiday Jump!

A Christmas Story & Song

By Amy Rogell

Everyone is dancing, full of good cheer, Santa will soon be here! In this adorable holiday board book, a busy happy family prepares for Santa's arrival.



Imagination Learning Center

Teacher: Miss Janice

Class: The Lions

What's Happening this Month?

Lessons:

- Sequence of Events
- Middle Sounds
- Similies
- Ten in Every Number
- Addition & Subtraction
- Sorting by shape, size
- number & color
- Focus on Squares
- Review of previous topics

Activities:

- Dec. 3 & 4 Teddy Bear Portrait Sales
- Dec. 10 Last drop-off day - Our Neighbor's Child Gifts
- Dec. 11 Reindeer Food 10:00 (3's & up)
- Dec. 13 Louis the Magician 10:30 (2's & up)
- Dec. 25 Center Closed for Christmas Holiday

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