

DECEMBER HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Objective(s): The students will:

1. Become familiar with the customs and traditions of Christmas and Hanukkah or Kwanzaa.
2. Analyze the similarities and differences between two holidays.
3. Communicate positive thoughts through the creation of Holiday Kindness Coupons.

TEKS: SS K.12; K.15A,B; K.16A; 1.15A; 1.17A,B; 1.18; 2.14C; 2.17A; 2.18

Materials Needed: Chart paper, a children's literature book about Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, Venn Diagram(s), copies of Holiday Kindness Coupons for students in class

Vocabulary: Celebration, Christmas, coupon, customs, Hanukkah, holiday, Kwanzaa (optional), traditions

Teaching Strategies:

1. Preceding the presentation of the lesson, the teacher should label two separate sheets of chart paper. One sheet should be headed with the title "Christmas" and the other with the title "Hanukkah." (The holiday of Kwanzaa may be used instead of Hanukkah.)
2. Tell students that during the month of December there are many celebrations. Most of them are religious celebrations and are celebrated around the world, not just in the United States.
3. Ask students what they know about Christmas and list the information on the appropriate chart. If desired, the teacher may want to represent some of the students' responses with illustrations. Collected information should include the purpose of the holiday, date of the celebration, family customs and traditions, holiday symbols, etc.
4. If Hanukkah (or Kwanzaa) is an unfamiliar holiday to students, the teacher should share a children's literature book about the holiday. After students have adequate background knowledge, the teacher should lead students to complete the other chart by listing information about the second holiday as they did for Christmas.
5. Using a large Venn Diagram drawn on chart paper or the board, lead the class to analyze how the selected holidays are alike and

how they are different. If desired, students may be put in pairs to complete their own Venn Diagrams, if age appropriate.

6. The teacher should point out that one of the things both holidays have in common is “gift-giving.” Emphasize that some of the best gifts we can give others cost nothing and are free such as our time, thoughtfulness, help, support etc...
7. Have students brainstorm a list of specific positive acts of kindness they can perform for members of their families for no cost such as cleaning up the kitchen after a meal, making the bed, feeding pets, picking up toys, yard work, helping a brother or sister with homework or playing with them, etc. Record students’ responses on a chart or board.
8. Give each student 1, 2 or 3 pages of Holiday Kindness Coupons and have them complete the coupons for one or several family members. Students should list the specific acts of kindness they will perform. Students should be reminded that they are expected to do what they list on each Holiday Kindness Coupon.
9. When coupons are completed, they may be taken home and given to the appropriate people. (Suggestion: Students can also make a cover and staple them together to form a coupon booklet.)

Evaluation:

Ask students complete the following open-ended sentence(s):

- If I could give our school a gift for the holidays, I would give the gift of _____ because _____.
- If I could give our town/community a gift for the holidays, I would give the gift of _____ because _____.
- If I could give the world a gift for the holidays, I would give the gift of _____ because _____.

Extension Activity:

After several weeks, the teacher should have students sit in a circle on the floor. Ask students to share with the class an act of kindness they performed during the past few weeks. Have students tell how it made them feel to do something for someone else. Ask students if they would rather give a gift to someone else or receive a gift and to explain why.

Holiday Kindness Coupon



To: _____

From: _____

This coupon entitles you to: _____

Holiday Kindness Coupon



To: _____

From: _____

This coupon entitles you to: _____
