

Saying Goodbye with a Homemade Gift

Many tutors develop close relationships with their tutees. When the tutoring relationship comes to an end, you may want to give your student a small gift. Homemade gifts are a great way to show children that you are thinking about them even when you are not together. Incorporating examples of the work you have done together will help children remember you and—most importantly—all they have learned and accomplished.

The following suggestions include materials, instructions, and possible variations. If you're feeling especially creative, combine two or more of these ideas—a photo book/portfolio combination, for example, or add new ideas and variations of your own.

Portfolio

A bound collection of writing and drawing created by the child during tutoring sessions. This is a great way to highlight accomplishments and praise hard work!

Materials:

1. Examples of tutee's writing and drawing
2. List of books tutee read with tutor (if available)
3. Blank white colored paper (e.g., cardstock or construction paper)
4. Stapler
5. Pens or markers

Instructions:

1. Organize the child's drawing and written work, preferably in order so the oldest work is at the front of the book and the newest appears at the end of the book.
2. Make a list of all books the child read in tutoring sessions, if applicable. Give it a title such as *Melanie's Booklist* or *Books Read by Melanie*.
3. Use cardstock or construction paper as front and back covers for the portfolio. Arrange materials in the sequence you've chosen.
4. Staple along the left side to bind the portfolio together.
5. Label and decorate the cover. Create a title such as *Melanie's Work* or *Melanie's Reading, Writing and Drawing*. You may include the start and end dates of your tutoring sessions, such as *September 2003 to June 2004*.

Variation:

Write a short letter to your tutee inside the book, on the first page or inside the front cover. Include any or all of the following: how much you enjoyed working together; specific reminders and praise for what she's learned and how she's progressed; what *you've* learned from your work together; wishes for a happy summer.

Photo Book

A memento for the child to recall the work he did with his tutor. For tutors with access to a camera and inexpensive photo developing services.

Materials:

1. Photographs. Take pictures of your tutee at work (i.e., reading, writing, playing word games, etc.) If possible, ask someone to take a picture of you and the child together. Three to five photos will be enough, but you can use more if you wish.
2. Colored construction paper or cardstock
3. Scissors or paper-cutter
4. Glue, rubber cement, or tape
5. Pen or markers
6. Stapler

Instructions:

1. Cut colored paper or cardstock to a size slightly larger than each photo. For example, for 4"x6" photos, cut the paper into 4 ½" x 6 ½" or 5" x 7" pieces. Cut one piece of paper for every picture, plus one extra.
2. Glue each photo in the middle of a piece of colored paper to create a colorful frame. If you don't have glue, use tape. Place tape on the back of the photo so it's not visible.
3. Use the extra piece of colored paper as a cover. Write a title, such as *Joe and Marcos Working Together* or *Marcos Reading and Writing*. You may include the start and end dates of your tutoring sessions, such as *September 2003 to June 2004*.
4. Decorate the cover page as you desire.
5. Put all the framed photos together with the cover page on top.
6. Staple along the left side to create a book.

Variations:

1. Write a short letter to your tutee inside the front cover. See Portfolio variations above for message ideas.
2. Write a caption under each photo in the book. For example: *Marcos Reading Poetry* or *Playing Word Games Together*.

Framed Photo

Another keepsake to help the child recall the work she did with her tutor. For tutors with access to a camera and inexpensive photo developing services.

Materials:

1. One photograph of the child reading, writing, or playing a word game
2. Colored paper or cardstock (one piece)
3. Scissors or paper-cutter
4. Glue, rubber cement, or tape
5. Pen or markers

Instructions:

1. Cut the colored paper or cardstock to be one inch larger than the photo on all four sides. For example, for a 4"x6" photo, cut a 5" x 7" piece of paper.
2. Glue photo in middle of the cut colored paper to frame it in color. If you don't have glue, use tape. Place tape on the back of the photo so it's not visible.
3. Decorate or label the frame. Write a title along the top or bottom edge or create designs with colored pens or markers along the edges.

Variation:

Write a short letter to your tutee on the back of the photo frame. See Portfolio variations above for message ideas.

Greeting Card

This is a simple yet thoughtful way to reinforce and praise the child's learning.

Materials:

1. White or colored paper
2. Pens or markers

Instructions:

1. Fold paper in half.
2. Decorate outside of card as you choose. Include pictures relevant to your work together such as books, pencils, book titles, animals or objects of interest to the student (e.g., cat, dog, soccer ball, ice skates). Write a greeting on the front such as *Have a Happy Summer!* or *Great Work!*
3. Write a letter to your tutee inside the card. See Portfolio variations above for message ideas.

Variation:

If you want to decorate the card but don't feel comfortable drawing, cut out color photos from magazines and newspapers. Find pictures that are relevant to the child's interests and your work together and glue them onto the card as you choose.