



PRACTICAL WAYS TO CREATE MEANING

The Quiltmaker's Gift

Time: 20-30 minutes (With extension: 40-50 minutes)

Audience: All ages

Learning objectives: Participants will be able to say, I can:

- Identify ways giving makes me happy.
- Identify used, experiential and/or homemade gifts I can give others.

Supplies needed:

- *The Quiltmaker's Gift*, by Jeff Brumbeau
- Paper and writing utensils
- Background information can be found in these resources: [Gratitude Letter as a Gift](#), [Printable Gift Certificates](#) (scroll down page to find them), [Finding Used Gems](#) and [Give Gifts of Experience](#).

<p>5 min.</p>	<p>Welcome/Icebreaker</p> <p>Welcome participants, introduce yourself, and explain that the session is part of a state-wide Reclaim Your Holidays initiative, a program of the University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy and Environmental Education. Two grant programs in Iowa—the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act Conservation Education Fund and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Solid Waste Alternatives Program—have provided support for this project.</p> <p>Then, ask everyone to go around the room* and share their first name and <i>“In one sentence, describe a memorable time with your <u>grandchildren, nieces or nephews.</u>”**</i> Or, if participants are not grandparents, aunts or uncles, then ask them to share a favorite memory of their childhood with their grandparent or special adult.</p> <p>Model the exercise for participants by saying, <i>“My name is ___ and a memorable time with my grandchild/niece/nephew was _____.”</i></p> <p>* If the group is large, ask them to do this activity with the 3-4 people near them.</p> <p>**Select appropriate type of relationships, depending on the ages of your audience.</p>
<p>5-17 minutes</p>	<p>Activity and Discussion Questions</p> <p>Read and show illustrations from the book, <i>The Quiltmaker's Gift</i>.</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <p>Select/adapt questions according to how much time you have, what age group you are working with, and the time of year. Include the last two questions to help your audience think more about their personal giving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did the king want? (One of the quilts.) Why? (He did not have one – the fact that they were not for sale made them even more valuable to the king.) • What did the king want? (Happiness, which he thought he could find in possessions.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He used two methods to try to get his way. What were they, and did they work? (Putting her in a cave with a hungry bear, and putting her on a tiny island in the middle of the sea. The quilt maker used the opportunities to give something to the animals, and in return they saved her.) • What was the deal that the quilt maker made with the king? (Each time you give something away, I will sew a piece of your quilt.) • What did the king discover? (Giving his things away made him happier than owning them.) • What did the king give to the quilt maker? (His throne—comfortable for sitting in while she made quilts.) • What happens to the king at the end? (He delivers quilts for the quilt maker as he has discovered that giving makes him the most happy.) • The king determines that giving makes him happy. On a piece of paper, write down one to three ways you give that makes you happy. (Possible answers: Helping with chores at home, volunteering, doing someone a favor, treating someone extra special on their birthday, writing a kind note to your sister/daughter/brother/son/mother/father/guardian, giving away toys you don't need.) When everyone has written an answer, share answer with an elbow partner, and then share several examples with the large group. • On the same piece of paper, write down one to three creative gifts you can give at upcoming celebrations (birthdays, graduations, etc.) or holidays. You can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) share something that own that you know a friend or family member would enjoy; 2) make something; 3) buy something used; and/or 4) give an experiential gift. <p>See Gratitude Letter as a Gift, Printable Gift Certificates (scroll down page to find them), Finding Used Gems and Give Gifts of Experience resources.</p>
<p>5 minutes</p>	<p>Action Plan: Invite participants to take a moment to think about and answer the question: <i>Of the ways you give that make you happy (from the list you created during the last exercise), what one of those—if any—would you like to do in the coming week?</i></p> <p>Ask them to write down their answer, so they can be reminded of it later. Go around the room and ask those who are willing to share their ideas, with the instructor going first.</p> <p>Note: When people commit aloud to doing something, research shows that they are more likely to follow through with it.</p>
<p>1 minute</p>	<p>Inspiration/Conclusion Conclude by encouraging participants to check out the website (ReclaimYourHolidays.org) where they can find many ideas for second-hand, experiential and homemade gifts.</p> <p>Then, if possible, tie your conclusion to <i>The Quiltmaker's Gift</i>. With adults, you might say, "May your holiday season be as rich as the king's newfound life is to him."</p>

Possible extension: Have every participant write a Gratitude Letter. If you choose to do this activity, provide the needed supplies for your audience.

Reclaim your Holidays is a project of the University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy & Environmental Education in partnership with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Support for this project is provided by the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) Conservation Education Program and Iowa Department of Natural Resources Solid Waste Alternatives Program Agreement Number 10-G550-41FL. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of IDNR. For more information, visit www.ReclaimYourHolidays.org.