

## 10 Ways to Appreciate Your Teacher

Wednesday was the official Teacher Appreciation Day. But if you missed your opportunity to thank your child's teacher, remember that this whole week is designated as Teacher Appreciation Week! Looking for ways to appreciate your students' teachers in a big way? Here are some ideas:

- **Write a thank you note:** Not an email, not a text, but a real letter that expresses what you most appreciate about the educator who has been working with your child this whole year.
- **Encourage your student to write a note:** Handwritten thank you notes aren't as common as they used to be, but they're still an elegant means of expressing gratitude. And thank you notes aren't just for those young students who are still learning to write and spell, by the way. A heartfelt letter from a middle or high schooler can have a big impact on a teacher.
- **Send supplies:** No matter what time of year it is, teachers appreciate basic supplies like dry erase markers, push pins, tape, scissors, hand wipes, and books for their classroom libraries.
- **Donate to a teacher's pet cause:** Does he volunteer with a local animal rescue group? Is she an avid hiker? Did your teacher recently lose a beloved parent to cancer or volunteer with a group that helps immigrants? Consider donating to a non-profit organization in your teacher's name.
- **Gift a gift card** – and be creative! Coffee is always appreciated, but consider, too, a gift card to a flower shop, restaurant, movie theater, crafts store, book or gift shop, sporting goods store, or special bakery. Any place that a teacher could go and feel a little pampered!
- **Give the gift of time** – May gets to be a wee bit hectic for teachers. Consider offering your teacher a couple of hours of volunteer time – either during the school day or on the weekend. They may need help creating end-of-the-year folders for student work, for instance, or tidying up their supply closets, sorting books, making copies, or preparing their rooms for the summer.
- **Fill a basket** with a few of your teacher's favorite things – whether it's baking supplies, music, a craft (such as knitting or woodworking), gardening tools, picnic supplies, or DVDs and books related to a trip he or she is taking this summer.

- **Curate a play list** In the old days we made CDs as thank you presents (and before that we made cassettes!). Now you can use services like Spotify to curate a list of just about any kind of music – from show tunes to ancient Mayan music and from American folk to the most abstract jazz. Hint: Foreign language teachers might enjoy a compilation of songs in the language they teach; teachers who include reading periods in their days might appreciate quiet background music.
- **Decorate a teacher's door** It's crazy simple but can also be a wonderful surprise. Let the students write "I love my teacher because...." messages on post-its or butcher block paper. Or tape up gift cards, word art, or inspirational images of what summer will bring! (Pinterest has hundreds of ideas for teacher door art, if you need inspiration.)
- **Treat your teacher to...** Sweet treats can be great. But something practical can be even better this time of year – like a pot of homemade soup or stew, a jar of your best made-from-scratch tomato sauce or pesto, or a basket of healthy muffins that your teacher can share with staff. Think about food that will lighten your teacher's load a little this busy time of year!

Some of these projects take time, of course, which brings us to our final point. There's no need to limit yourself to one day or one week for thanking a teacher. It can happen any time of year!