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Creative Valentine's Day Activities

By Richard Flowers

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I have never met a person whose greatest need was anything other than real, unconditional love. You can find it in a simple act of kindness toward someone who needs help. There is no mistaking love. You feel it in your heart. It is the common fiber of life, the flame of that heats our soul, energizes our spirit and supplies passion to our lives. It is our connection to God and to each other.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

You know the routine, parents shell out millions of dollars each year on Valentine's Card for kids to pass out in their classrooms with the usual mass marketed cartoon figures printed on them. This article will explore some other fun activities that kids and families can do at home and school to celebrate the day of love.

"We never know the love of a parent till we become parents ourselves."

Henry Ward Beecher

One activity that I enjoy in my classroom is making lady love bug rocks. This is a great activity, since it can be done with supplies that many families and classrooms already have. Many people have small river rocks sitting around their yards. Some yards, like my own have been landscaped with small, round river rocks, sometimes referred to as drain field rock. These rocks average from 2 to 5 inches and are generally an oval shape. The school that I teach at has an abundance of these rocks. We go out as a classroom and the kids are able to pick out their favorite rock that they want to turn into a ladybug love rock. The rocks are washed off and allowed to thoroughly dry. The supplies that you will need for this project includes: red, white and black paint (I just use red tempura), brushes, wiggly eyes (if you don't have wiggly eyes you can just paint the eyes on), pipe cleaners, appliques of all types (this includes lace, raffia, ribbon, buttons etc.) Put a base coat of red or orange paint on the entire rock and allow to thoroughly dry. You then use black paint to brush on stripes and spots on your ladybugs.

Pick out a black pipe cleaner and glue it to the top of the head for the antenna. You can also glue on legs, but I have found this unnecessary. Glue on any other appliques to make your lady love bug an expression of your own artistic expression. Allow the project to thoroughly dry. These lady lovebugs make great gifts for Valentines Day and great paperweights!

The great thing about this project is using the project as a catalyst to teach thematically in other subject areas. For music the kids could learn song called the Ladybug Song. It is easy to sing since it is a piggyback song. Piggyback songs are songs that have been keyed to familiar melodies. This makes the song very easy to teach and learn.

Lady Bug Song

(Sung to "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star")

Lady Bug, Lady Bug
She landed on my nose
I went "kerchoo!" and
Off she flew!
Her body is round with
Big black dots,
My mommy told me
They're called spots.
Lady Bug, Lady Bug
She looks really neat
With her bright red wings,
And tiny black feet!

For science your kids could learn some of these fascinating facts about lady bugs. Read over these fascinating facts with you children and discuss them.

- When the temperature is about 59 degrees Fahrenheit, lady bugs become active.
- Ladybugs hibernate in cold weather.
- Lady bugs are cold blooded.
- The lady bug uses its front legs to clean its head and its antennae.
- Lady bugs and there larvae eat aphids.
- Ladybugs lay there eggs where aphids are present.
- There are 350 species of lady bugs in our country.
- Lady bugs go through complete metamorphosis.
- Lady bugs are a type of beetle.
- All species of lady bugs have short legs. This separates them from other beetles.
- Not all lady bugs are female.
- A lady bug lets out a yellowish liquid when it is mad. The liquid has a bad smell to its predators.
- A lady bug's top flying speed is about fifteen miles per hour.
- The eggs of a lady bug are not visible to the naked eye.

For reading, a couple of books I recommend are The Grouchy Ladybug by Eric Carle and Are You a Ladybug by Judy Allen.

The spiritual meaning of love is measured by what it can do. Love is meant to heal. Love is meant to renew. Love is meant to bring us closer to God.

Deepak Chopra, The Path to Love

For writing you could ask your child to write an expository paper about the steps that they went through to create their ladybugs and to include some facts they learned about ladybugs that they found fascinating. You could even cover math by counting out equations on the six legs of the ladybugs. Use the legs as a math manipulative. You can even create story problems such as this one.

Mary, Heather, Marqueta and Joelle all made one ladybug in class for Valentines Day. How many legs are there if each ladybug has six legs?

The possibilities with story problem math problems are unlimited. Problems can be created to cover all math operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division!

So, there you have it. There is an alternative to the everyday mass-produced cartoon cards that pervade Valentines Day. You certainly can still pass out cards, but adding a creative craft project such as the lady lovebugs to you Valentine's Day festivities will create rewarding, educational and fun activities that you and your children will never forget.

We can only learn to love by loving.

Iris Murdoch

Richard Flowers, AA, BS, MS, AS, CT, is an award winning first grade teacher in Southern Oregon. Richard's avocation is helping others. He is happy to answer all questions and correspondence.

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~Happy Valentine's Day~

By Patricia *Lite* Hickman, RM

~Happy Valentine's Day~ by Patricia *Lite* Hickman, RM

"HAPPINESS IS...
SOMETHING YOU DECIDE ON,
AHEAD OF TIME" ~
Mrs. Jones, 92 yrs old

~HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY~ This is February, the month we celebrate love, not only relationship love, but more importantly, self love. Not everyone is in relationship, for those that are, I wish you the most Blessed Valentine's Day,,,ever :-)

For those that aren't, I wish you the most Blessed Valentine's Day,,,ever! This Valentine's Day (and month), celebrate the love you have in your life, friend(s), family, pet(s)~ celebrate loving yourself, and where you are right now. :-)

Grounding/centering, working on projects that have been put off in the household, or an extra 30 minutes

of work-out time is also a good use of the energy.If you are feeling anger or frustration, or find yourself around angry people, or situations, just send yourself a beam of love or give yourself a hug -) Weather might also be a tad bit bizarre, as it has been in Wisconsin :-) Stay warm darlings, and if possible stay home :-)

The GOOD NEWS most people will focused on LOVE, this Valentine's Day. Love energy will be flowing for most of us, and that's the best energy we can operate under :-) let the love flow this February 14th. Let us approach it as a Return to Love, give yourself a hug everyday, just because, you deserve it :-)

I wish you Love and Light, during the month of February, and always~

Lite

www.astrongwoman.org

Psychic and clairaudient, I am, a Reiki Master, Healer, Minister and Metaphysician for more than 25 years. In order to find out the answers to my life, I studied Astrology, Tarot, Numerology, Religion, Psychic Phenomena, as well as Healing, Spirit Releasement Therapy and Psychic Self Defense. I am the Grandmother of 9 and reside in Milwaukee, WI

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