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Master in the Art of Teaching

10 Cheap, Quick and Easy Holiday Craft Ideas for Teachers

- Reindeer Puzzle Piece Ornament
- Pine Cone Snowman
- Write Santa Directions to Help Him Out of The Chimney
- Gumdrops Trees
- Candy Cane Reindeer
- Thumbprint String of Lights
- Handprint Menorahs
- Hershey Kiss Christmas Mouse
- Rice Cake Polar Bears
- Gingerbread Holiday Ornaments

10 GREAT HOLIDAY CRAFT ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR STUDENTS

The holidays are as exciting as they are hectic—especially when you’re a teacher. Not only do you have to plan out celebrations for your family, you’ve also got a classroom (or classrooms) full of kids to think about! If you’re running behind this year, or simply looking for a few new holiday activities to supplement the tried and true, look no further: Here are a few of our favorites.

REINDEER PUZZLE PIECE ORNAMENT



This project, which comes from Jackie and Mike over at [Happy Hooligans](#), is too cute for its own good. It’s also cheap and easy to make. You may want to glue the puzzle pieces and yarn hanger ahead of time so that all your students need to do is paint and add the eyes and nose.

What you’ll need:

- Puzzle pieces, three per student. We recommend stopping by your local Goodwill or Salvation Army for these
- Brown paint. If you’re working with younger children, you may want to go with Crayola’s non-toxic, washable paint
- Googly eyes, red craft pom poms
- Amazing Goop contact adhesive and sealant: Goop is strong enough to hold just about anything and you won’t have to worry about your students getting burned with a hot glue gun. Most hardware and craft stores sell this.
- One ball of brown yarn



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PINE CONE SNOWMAN



We were lucky enough to come across this idea when we stumbled onto Jennifer Juniper's blog, [Hope Studios](#). It's certainly one of our favorites. If you are using Goop instead of hot glue, you may have to divide this project up into a few sessions while you wait for the glue to dry: one session will be devoted to securing the snowman's head to the pine cone and painting the toothpicks orange; another to adding Snowtex, glitter and the beads; another to glue the arms to the body.

What you'll need

- Pine cones
- Styrofoam balls
- Snowtex
- White glitter
- Goop
- Twigs
- Small beads
- Toothpicks
- Orange paint



What you'll do

Use Goop (or hot glue if you dare) to attach the Styrofoam ball to the top of the pine cone. To make a more secure connection, poke the tip of the cone right into the ball. Now remove, add glue and pop it back on. Wait for the pieces to completely dry.

Now use a small cookie frosting tool—plasticware works, too—to slather the ball and upper portion of the cone with Snowtex—be generous!

Try to fill in the area between the ball and the cone to make it look like the snow is dripping down, then hit the tips of the cone's "petals" all the way down to the base. Sprinkle the wet Snowtex with glitter. If you do this over a paper plate, you can funnel the excess right back into the container.



Press some beads into the face for the eyes and mouth.

Use the tip of a toothpick (painted orange) for a nose. Tell your kids to be careful when working with these! Stick it right into the foam ball. Now use Goop (or hot glue) to attach a twig onto each side for arms



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WRITE SANTA DIRECTIONS TO HELP HIM OUT OF THE CHIMNEY

We got this idea from [Mrs. Feinman](#), a first grade teacher for the Houston Independent School District. We like this project not only because it is cute and creative, but also because it helps students hone their writing skills—not to mention it’s also a great way to decorate your classroom for the holidays!

What you’ll need:

- Construction paper (red, white and black)
- Lined paper
- Glue
- Rulers
- Pencil
- Black crayon to draw in the chimney brick

What you’ll do:

Before your students dive in and start creating their own “Stuck Santa,” show them one you created. Artistically inclined students may enjoy modifying the original design by adding arms, Santa’s hat or even a big bag of presents!

Now for the written portion of the project: After they’ve created their chimney and Santa, give your students a sentence starter: “Oh no, Santa is stuck in my chimney!” Now ask your children to write down three ways to get him unstuck! Before they commit to their ideas, they may want to practice on a scrap piece of paper.



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GUMDROP TREES

This idea comes courtesy of Marie LeBaron, the founder and managing editor of [Make and Takes](#). It's so easy to make, we don't even need to tell you how to do it!



What you'll need

- Styrofoam cones (one per student)
- Gumdrop candies (preferably green and red)
- Toothpicks



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CANDY CANE REINDEER

This idea comes courtesy of [All Things Simple](#). If you gave the Puzzle Piece Reindeer Ornament project a shot, you may have enough extra googly eyes, pom poms and brown yarn left over to get you started.

What you'll need

- Candy canes (two per student)
- Brown yarn
- Googly eyes
- Craft pom poms
- Ribbon (red, white or green)
- Glue
- Kraft jingle bells



1 What you'll do

Place the candy canes side by side so that the tops create an "M" shape. Wrap them in a generous amount of brown yarn and either tie or glue the loose end. Glue on the googly eyes and craft pom poms. Thread the ribbon through the jingle bell, wrap, tie and cut excess ribbon.



2 Proudly display the reindeer in your left hand while you chug juice with the other!



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THUMB PRINT STRING OF LIGHTS

Simple, cheap and a great way to get your students excited about writing! We owe a big thanks to [Lori Campbell](#) and [Jill from Meet the Dubians](#) for this idea.

What you'll need

- Card stock paper
- Colored construction paper
- Black Sharpie
- Finger paint—the more colors the better
- Glue

What you'll do

Before you start, you may want to cut the card stock paper so that it fits nicely on a folded piece of construction paper. Inside your students will write their holiday greeting. Distribute the card stock paper and have your students use a black Sharpie to draw a string of lights. Next, have them stamp their thumb in different colors along the light string and allow the paint to dry. Grab the Sharpie again and draw a squiggly for the base of the light bulb. Now your students are ready to glue their masterpiece onto their choice of colored construction paper. But before they reach for the glue, make sure that they're satisfied with the message they've written on the inside!



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HANDPRINT MENORAHS

We gleaned a great idea from Mrs. Feinman's blog.
Again, this is so simple that we'll leave it to you to figure it out.



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HERSHEY KISS CHRISTMAS MOUSE



"Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse..."

You remember the poem, right? After you and your kids revisit this classic, why not bring it to life with this cute little project?

What you'll need

- Hershey kisses (Duh!)
- Googly eyes
- Pink, flat-backed gems
- Pink construction paper
- Brown ribbon
- Thick brown twine
- Brown grocery bags
- Black pen or Sharpie
- Goop

What you'll do

You can do this in any order you like, but here's what we do: First, break out the construction paper and cut out the ears. Use a pen or black Sharpie to scribble around the edges. Now apply a conservative drop of glue to the bottoms of each ear and stick them to flat side of one of your Hershey Kisses. Now glue on the googly eyes and nose.

Now it's time to make your mouse tail: Cut a short piece of twine, grab your ribbon and tie a bow to one end of the twine. Peel back the foil from the tip of your other Hershey Kiss, tuck the tail in, apply glue and cover it as best you can with the foil.

Now you're ready to glue the two halves of the mouse together.

We thought it looked cute to put our mouse on a box, but if you don't have enough of these, simply cut a rectangle out of a brown paper bag.



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RICE CAKE POLAR BEARS

Polar bears are holiday-themed enough, aren't they? And even if they're not, who doesn't like polar bears? A big thanks to [Jill Dubien](#) for sharing this delectable snack idea with us! Be sure to stop by [her website](#) for more holiday craft ideas.

What you'll need

- 1 rice cake
- Cream cheese
- 2 chocolate chips
- 2 mini crackers
- *Nutella* in a squeeze bottle

What you'll do

1. Using your knife, spread a thin layer of cream cheese on your rice cake. Place the rice cake on your plate, cream cheese side up.
2. Place 2 chocolate chips on the rice cake for the eyes.
3. Take your 2 mini crackers and stick them on your rice cake for the ears.
4. Grab your squeeze bottle of *Nutella* and squirt on a nose for your polar bear.
5. Finally, grab your squeeze bottle of jam and squeeze on 2 little sweet cheeks.



This super simple snack is really healthy for your little ones and takes less than five minutes to make. You can't lose. You're definitely going to want to try this one out!



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GINGERBREAD HOLIDAY ORNAMENTS

This one comes from our friend and frequent guest blogger, Christina Bainbridge. Stop by [her website](#) where you'll find endless resources and project ideas you can use in your own classroom!

What you'll need

- Oven access
- Holiday cookie cutters
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes
- 1 drinking straw
- Clear aerosol sealant
(Christina recommends Mod-Podge)
- Kitchen rollers
- Ribbon



Now that everything is mixed, give them time to play with the dough, roll it out and use a few of the holiday cookie cutters. You'll have dough left over, so feel free to divide it up, bag it and send it home with your kids.

Each group of five students will need

- 1 large mixing bowl
- 2 c. flour
- 1 c. salt
- 2 T. vegetable oil



What you'll do

Divide students up into groups of five. If you're daring, you can allow them to measure out the ingredients on their own. One thing is for sure: Your students are going to love getting their hands dirty when they take turns mixing the dough.

Once they've settled on their favorite ornament, grab a cookie sheet and throw them in the oven. Bake at 250 degrees for about 30 minutes. Don't forget to poke a hole in the top of each with a straw before baking!

You've baked the cookies and let them cool. It's time to paint, spray with sealant and tie your ribbon!



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