

Family Time Capsule

The beginning of the year is a time of celebration and remembrance. It's also a great excuse to get your child writing! Your child can use his developing writing skills to help record special family events and occasions from the previous year. In recalling the most memorable events from throughout the year, your child is exercising his critical thinking skills, too—an important skill for children of all ages.

“Wrap up” another great year with your family with this fun activity that engages your child and the whole family in creating a time capsule of special memories.

What You Need:

- Scraps of wrapping paper, saved from your holiday celebration
- Photos of family members, taken throughout the year
- Scissors
- Tape
- Pens and pencils
- Plain paper, or holiday-themed stationery
- Stapler, or book rings

What to Do:

1. Save a scrap of wrapping paper, slightly larger than a letter-size piece of paper. (You'll want to save a scrap for each family member.)
2. Ask your child to recall his favorite, most memorable events and moments from the previous year. What was the funniest moment he can remember? Why did he choose that particular event? The saddest? The most exciting? Were there any surprises this year? These are all memories that he can record on paper.
3. Assist him in writing simple sentences on plain or holiday-themed paper. He can write about them independently, or you can start his sentences for him and have him fill in the blank with his responses. For example, you may write: “The funniest thing that happened this year was _____.”
4. Look through your photos taken throughout the year. Have your child select one or two that match his responses (he can have photos for as many or as few of his responses as he likes). You may want to help him cut the photos to make them fit or you can cut them into different shapes simply for some added interest. He can tape them to the paper to accompany his writing.
5. Have him flatten and smooth the recycled wrapping paper, print side up, and tape his writing to the center of the paper. This will create a wrapping paper frame around his writing, creating a work of literary art that is worthy of display.
6. Have each family member complete a similar work of art, and display them in your home.
7. When you're ready to take the wrapping paper displays down, remove the papers from the wrapping paper, and bind them together with a stapler or set of book rings.
8. Use the wrapping paper to wrap the book of writings, and label the outside of the package with the previous year (the year that each family member's display is about). Store it with your holiday decorations, and take it out again next year during the holidays. You'll celebrate a year well spent, and have a whimsical reminder of your holiday season traditions, too. And that's a wrap!

