

O'Henry Christmas Story

O. Henry's short story "The Gift of the Magi" is a touching tale about a man and his wife living in poverty, yet still willing to sacrifice what little they have for each other's happiness. As your child writes his own version of the story, he will be encouraged to reflect on issues of self-image, sacrifice, love, and family. What better way to get into the holiday spirit?

A finished story also makes a great homemade Christmas present for a parent, grandparent, or sibling. For example, if the other character in the story is Dad, your child's story will be about a child and parent's love and sacrifice for each other—a heartwarming story that is sure to move any parent.

What You Need:

- Copy of *The Gift of the Magi* by O. Henry (check your local library)
- Pencil
- Paper

What You Do:

1. Read *The Gift of the Magi* with your child; discuss the themes of the story with your child, and encourage him to reflect on any observations he has.
2. Have your child brainstorm his own version of the story, replacing himself and a family member with the characters Della and Jim. Tell him to think about the possessions he cherishes most, and how it would feel to give these up. He should pick one prized possession to "sacrifice" in the story.
3. Encourage your child to write his own full-length version of the story based on an initial outline. He should use *The Gift of the Magi* for inspiration, but encourage him to get creative and reinvent the story using his own words.
4. After your child writes out his final draft, invite him to read it to you and discuss the choices he made in his version of the story.

This was no easy task! Congratulate your child on a job well done and encourage him to give this story as a personalized Christmas gift!

© Copyright 2006-2012 Education.com All Rights Reserved.

