

## Interdisciplinary Ideas

### LANGUAGE ARTS

1. As a class or with a partner, select and carry out a task from the following list:
  - Find all the words in the story that involve the senses.
  - Find situations where family members showed humor.
  - Find idioms in the story. Make an idiom chart. Illustrate the literal meaning on one side and write the actual meaning on the other side.
- \* Visit [www.heartwoodethics.org](http://www.heartwoodethics.org) and choose Teaching Heartwood, Attributes for a link to a list of "Other Ethical Attributes." Culture Keys offer cultural information.

2. Have a "Family Appreciation Day" at school. Invite family members to class and honor them by reading aloud stories or poems you have written expressing your appreciation for them. Frame writings and give as gifts.

### ART

1. Make a doll or action figure from baking clay. (Keyword: clay dough recipes bake)
2. Research hand made toys. Try to make some, such as corn husk dolls, dried apple figures, string and button whizzers, or rubber and spool cars. Write your own instructions and demonstrate for the class.

### SOCIAL STUDIES

1. In small groups, research farms in the 1930's. (Keyword: farms 1930's) Decide on a group project to display your information, such as a poster, booklet, or model farm. Follow through with your plans.
2. Rebecca's family, like many large families living during the Great Depression, had to "make do" and economize with meals. With a partner, research money-saving recipes from the Depression, such as "Poor Man's Bread" and "Depression Salad." (Keyword: recipes Great Depression) Share with the class.

## The Gingerbread Doll

Susan Tews  
1993  
New York: Clarion Books

### LOVE

U.S.A.  
Historical Fiction  
Reading Time: 10 minutes

### CONCEPTS

Love  
Hope  
Appreciation

### SUMMARY

**This poignant story, set in the Great Depression of the 1930's, speaks about the real value of gifts. Children can hear the story's message and recognize that real value is not measured in dollars and cents—we can be rich without money. Families find ways to express love even in the most trying times. Artist Megan Lloyd's muted watercolor paintings were inspired by the family of a builder who worked on her own house in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.**

### OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to identify, define, and discuss love, hope, and appreciation as they apply to this story. The student will explore differences between material wealth and more enduring kinds of wealth.

# After the Story

## The Gingerbread Doll

### DISCUSSION

1. Talk about Rebecca's family. How do you know they love each other? Look for signs of love and appreciation in the story, such as older children making a fuss over small gifts to help younger children enjoy the holiday.
2. Through her childhood Rebecca receives increasingly nice dolls. Why does she love Button Marie so much? Discuss the conversation between Mama and Rebecca when the doll breaks. What does Mama mean when she says, "She was a doll because you loved her"?
3. If you had no money and wanted to give a gift, what could you give?
4. Read the end of the story, pages 30-32. Why do you think Great Grandma Rebecca kept Button Marie's dress? Do you have a special gift that was made with love? Do you have one you might want to keep forever? Share.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Work in groups of three or four. Write "Rebecca" and "Mama" at the top of a piece of chart paper. Under each name list the person's character traits and examples of those traits from the story. Use Heartwood attributes or other ethical attributes.\* Report to your class and post for others to read.
2. Collect stories from people who lived during the Great Depression. (Keyword: Great Depression stories) Take notes and report stories to the class. Where possible, tell stories that show love and hope.
3. Fold a sheet of paper in half. Make two columns, one titled OBJECTS (concrete), the other titled NOT OBJECTS (abstract). In each column list things you value. Share and discuss. Place a star beside the items you cannot do without. Explain your choices.

### WRAP-UP

1. As a follow-up to Activity #3, write in *My Heartwood Journal* about the things you cannot do without. Give explanations for your choices.
2. Write a short essay or poem about something you value that you cannot buy.

### EXTENSION

1. Ask someone at home to help you make a meaningful gift that costs little. Give it as an act of love.
2. With a grown up, find items around your house that have great worth because they came with love rather than a high price tag. Make a list, and if you like, show and tell about them in the classroom.

### VOCABULARY

**tarpaper**  
**delicate**  
**set his jaw**

**porcelain**  
**pinch pennies**