



IDEAS FOR YEAR'S END

Acknowledging the Students

Presenting each student with a small token of acknowledgement is a thoughtful and much appreciated way to end the ELF year. Here are some suggested items that are easy to make:

- Certificates (see *ELF Student Certificates* in this manual for ideas);
- Buttons / Badges / Medallions;
- Magnets;
- Bookmarks;
- A personal card from you.

Acknowledging the Student Volunteers

A certificate is a nice way to let your student volunteers know that you couldn't get along without them (see *Student ELF Volunteer Certificate* in this manual for ideas). Here are some other ways to let Student Volunteers know they're appreciated:

- Design an ELF T-shirt especially for volunteers;
- Plant a tree in their honor;
- Donate a book to the school library in their honor;
- Present them with a card or certificate that includes a photo of them working with the younger kids;
- Ask the students in the ELF class to make a Thank-You card or gift for the older student volunteers;
- Arrange for a group picture and short article in the local newspaper.

Sharing It All

Have an ELF Day Celebration – a day of ELF related activities near the end of the school year! Stations might be set up around the school with children participating in nature crafts and outdoor games. Kids could also be planting shrubs, making ELF quilt squares (you could auction off the full quilt later as a fundraiser!), and creating and singing ELF-related songs. It's also a great opportunity to display photos and student work from the year – art, writing, etc. Invite your student volunteers (this might be a good time to present them with their “thank you”) and don't forget to notify parents and the local media!

Create an ELF float for a local parade (4th of July, Memorial Day, etc.). You might include flags, banners, papier-mâché critters from your ELF year, etc.

Plan a year-end field trip to a beaver pond, working quarry, local park or anywhere that reflects your year-long ELF theme. Scout out the site first and design a scavenger hunt card that combines many aspects of your year's ELF lessons.

Bring one of the VINS Outreach programs to your school as a final full school assembly.

Have the whole school participate in Green-Up Day around the school grounds.

Organize an Earth Day Celebration that focuses on that year's ELF theme. Ask each classroom to create a song or skit about our relationship to the natural world. Perform these all in a full school assembly.

If you have other ideas, please let us know so we can share them with the other ELF programs!