

## AUCTION BASKET IDEAS

Creative theme baskets make excellent raffle prizes and silent auction items. Creating a basket is as simple as choosing a theme, finding some interesting items that fit the theme, and placing them in a basket or, better yet, a themed container to sell or raffle as a single unit.

You might assign a theme to each classroom and ask a coordinator (typically the room parent) to solicit donations from families. Local businesses often are willing to donate gift cards, services, or even specific products. And sometimes teachers will collaborate on a basket.

The options for creative themes, items, and presentations are endless. Think of our list as a guide—use these ideas as is, or just as a way to get your own ideas flowing. Don't be afraid to use your imagination—the sky's the limit!

### **Pamper Mom**

Suggested items: Bubble bath, bath salts, towels, candles, a CD of meditative music, gift card to a local salon and/or for a massage.

Creative twist: Make the container part of the pampering—use a foot bath or a pretty basket suitable for keeping personal items.

### **For the Golfers**

Suggested items: Tees, golf balls, visor, gloves, book about golf, a gift card to a golf store or to a local course.

Creative twist: Present the items in a sports bag.

### **Grillers' Delight**

Suggested items: Utensils, marinades, mitts, charcoal, cookbooks about grilling.

Creative twist: Use a small grill as the basket.

### **Baby Love**

Suggested items: Diapers, diaper bag, onesies, burp cloths, infant toys, board books, teething rings, baby socks, bibs.

Creative twist: Present the items in a baby bathtub.

### **For a Book Club**

Suggested items: A few bestselling books, wine glasses, wine, gourmet snacks, gift card to local bookstore or Amazon.com.

Creative twist: Assemble the items in a pretty book bag.

### **Get Ready for Kindergarten**

Suggested items: Educational games and toys, school spiritwear, school water bottle. Pack in a backpack.

Creative twist: If possible, arrange it so the principal or a kindergarten teacher presents the items to the winner.

### **Outdoor Adventures**

Suggested items: Sleeping bag, fishing pole, mini lanterns, fixings for s'mores (graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate), head lamps, bug spray, citronella candles, gift cards to outdoor stores.

Creative twist: Pack the contents into a cooler or a tent.

### **Movie Night at Home**

Suggested items: Boxes of candy and microwave popcorn, DVDs, movie passes, blankets, store gift cards (for DVDs and snacks).

Creative twist: Include restaurant gift cards so families can order takeout dinners as part of their night.

### **Italian Dinner Night**

Suggested items: High-end pastas, a variety of sauces, Italian bread/bread sticks, Parmesan cheese, a bottle of red wine, and gift cards to an Italian deli and local Italian restaurant.

Creative twist: Present the items in a large pasta bowl.

### **For Gardeners**

Suggested items: Garden store gift card, planters, watering cans, gloves, seeds, sunscreen, hand lotion, bags of soil, garden rack.

Creative twist: Pack the contents into a small garden cart (available at gardening stores or large stores like Walmart).

### **Aquarium**

Suggested items: Fish-theme games and books, gift card to pet store, instructional books on fish care.

Creative twist: Present the items in an aquarium.

### **Family Fitness**

Suggested items: Water bottles, fitness DVDs, books on healthy family activities (hikes, outdoor vacations, etc.), dumbbells, passes to local gyms and other fitness facilities (like roller-skating rinks).

Creative twist: Try to get local fitness businesses to donate services as part of the basket.

### **For the Dogs (or Cats)**

Suggested items: Gift card to a pet store, dog (or cat) toys, dog (or cat) food bowls, pet jersey or sweater, shampoo and other grooming supplies, a leash.

Creative twist: Assemble the contents into a dog or cat bed.

### Arts and Crafts

Suggested items: Markers, pens, colored pencils, crayons, craft paint, construction paper, paint brushes, stamping kit, jewelry kits, small wooden model kits, loom bracelet kit, poster board, gift card to craft store.

Creative twist: Present the items in a portable three-drawer storage cart.

### Summer Fun

Suggested items: Beach towels, beach toys, balls, sun-block, sunglasses, gift cards to mini golf or other summer activities, yard toys (Frisbee, plastic bowling pins), bubbles, sidewalk chalk.

Creative twist: Present the items in a small outdoor sand-box.

### Fun With Science

Suggested items: Tickets to science museum (if you have one nearby), science games, experiment kits, science puzzles, glow-in-the-dark ceiling stickers, goggles, a child-sized lab coat.

Creative twist: Consider setting up a simple experiment or two and demonstrate it during the event.

### Baking With Kids

Suggested contents: Baking mixes (muffins, cakes, cookies), frosting, baking with kids cookbook, aprons, kids' mixing utensils, measuring cups, cookie cutters, decorating supplies.

Creative twist: Display the items in a large mixing bowl.

### All Sports

Suggested items: Balls (baseball, basketball, football, soccer), tickets to local sporting events, gift card to a sporting goods store, Frisbee, sports-team-theme apparel (shirts, hats, etc.) and blanket, water bottle, sports-theme books and board games

Creative twist: Arrange the items in a large duffel bag.

### Local Errands

Suggested contents: Gift cards for conveniences or attractions in your community like dry cleaning, grocery store, coffee shop, movie theater, restaurants, hair salon/barber shop, etc.

Creative twist: Make the idea of errands seem more fun by arranging a "chauffeur"—a volunteer driver for a few hours on a weekend—as part of the prize.

### Local Vendors

Suggested contents: Products from local vendors like baked goods, soap, jewelry, candles, and scarves (or other knitted creations).

Creative twist: Ask a local vendor to give a private tour to the winner. Kids would probably like going behind the scenes at the bakery or candle factory and seeing how they work.

### Quick Hits

**Team spirit:** a few theme items for a popular baseball or football team, if you have one in your area, and tickets to a game

**Coffee:** different varieties of coffee, and gift cards to local coffee shops

**Chocolate:** boxes of chocolate and samplings of loose chocolates, gift cards to a candy/chocolate shop

**Favorite kids' books:** ask your school's teachers to contribute to this one by choosing their favorite classic

**Legos:** different sets of Legos, gift card to Lego store

**Superheroes:** action figures, DVDs, games

**Cookies:** different varieties of cookies, a cookbook of cookie recipes

**Ice cream social:** ice cream dishes, sauces, sprinkles and other assorted toppings, gift card to local grocery store, gift card to ice cream shop

**Themed toys/games/books:** for example, all princess, all pirate, etc.

**Knitting fun:** yarn, needles, mini tape measure, stitch markers, gift card to yarn shop Creative theme baskets make excellent raffle prizes and silent auction items. Creating a basket is as simple as choosing a theme, finding some interesting items that fit the theme, and placing them in a basket or, better yet, a themed container to sell or raffle as a single unit.

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