Gifts of the Heart

Written and illustrated by Mrs. Cooper's Second Graders
December 2012
Our second grade class read *The Legend of the Poinsettia*, retold by Tommy dePaolo as part of our Winter Celebrations Throughout the World unit. Within this international theme, we shared the traditions of Las Posados and how the beautiful poinsettia became a focal point in this wonderful retelling of the humble gift from a small girl. My students listened to the story, created paper poinsettias, and wrote in journals about the value of a gift from the heart. During a second reading of the story, I had my students create an illustration in a drawing app (students used Drawing Box, Art Set, or Color Box HD) on our school iPads as they listened to the legend once more. The assignment was to draw a scene or a picture that came to their mind as they were inspired by the kind and simple gift that Lucida was able to give to the Baby Jesus in lieu of the beautiful blanket she intended to give. The children offered touching renditions and summaries of their journal entries in our digital book creation, and these second graders were able to truly grasp the meaning of the statement "any gift from the heart is beautiful."

*Mrs. Cooper*
My favorite part of the story was when Lucida and her mother were going to weave a blanket as a gift. They were excited to be chosen to make it.

Their gift is beautiful because it is given from the heart.

James
This story reminds me that your heart tells you if your gift is good or not.
This story tells me that a gift given by you is always something special if it's from the heart.
Lucida's weeds were from the heart, and any gift from the heart is good.
My favorite part was when the girl put the weeds down and they turned into poinsettias. This tells us to love your neighbor and remember every gift is good because it is given.
Any gift is a gift from the heart. It was great that she at least gave something to baby Jesus.

Raegan
When Lucida thought for a minute and grabbed a few weeds for Baby Jesus, her gift turned out to be the best gift of all for him. Everyone realized that even a little girl's gift could be very special.
My favorite part was when Lucida picked the weeds and set them in the temple next to the figure of Baby Jesus. As she knelt next to the Baby, the weeds were transformed into the best gift of all.

Every Gift is Pure!
Because it is given.

Caroline
My favorite part was when she walked into the church and the leaves turned into beautiful poinsettias once she gave them as a gift.
My drawing was inspired by the scene where the old woman told Lucida that gifts had true meaning when given from the heart.
Lucida told us that no matter how rich or poor, tall or short you are, your gift is beautiful if it is given from the goodness of your heart.
My drawing was inspired by giving. I drew a person giving a gift to another person. Any gift is great if it is given from the heart.
My favorite part was when the little girl brought in the weeds and then everybody did not understand how important the gift was at first.

Scarlett
My favorite part was when the weeds turned into poinsettias because any gift is beautiful, especially if you give it thoughtfully.

Tatnm

The Legend of the Poinsettia
My favorite part was when the old woman told Lucida that any gift given from the heart is perfect.
Poinsettias were just weeds but when given as a simple gift, they were transformed into beautiful bright flowers with yellow seeds inside.
I liked the part when the weeds magically turned into poinsettias. This book was written to remind us how important it is to give gifts from the heart.

Asher
My favorite part of the story was when the little girl brought the weeds into the church and laid them at the manger.
I was inspired by the part where she put the weeds on the manger, started to pray and they turned into beautiful poinsettias.

Wyatt
This story means that a small, simple gift (like weeds) can become a beautiful and meaningful present (like poinsettias) when you give it to another person.

Shawn
I was inspired for my drawing by the message that any gift is worth a lot and it is also very beautiful when it is given from the heart.
Enjoy this short video showing how Mrs. Cooper guided her students to create their page for the book.

Click here to see the longer video showcasing the students at work.