

SECRET SANTA

"BETTER TOGETHER" CULTURE STORY

THE IDEA:

We organized a **My Favorite Things Secret Santa** gift exchange with our staff. Inspired by Oprah's annual Favorite Things list, each participating staff member purchased three identical (or similar) meaningful items spending no more than \$25 to \$30 for all three combined. At the event, everyone brought three gifts and put their own name into a bowl three times. Next, everyone draws three names (discarding their own back, if they choose it). Then the gift giving begins! One person starts by giving their three gifts to the people they drew, and once those gifts are opened, he/she explains the meaning of the gift.

- **Kerri Malazdrewicz, Teacher and Council Advisor**
École Secondaire Neelin High School
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CULTURE RESULTS:

This is one of our most popular events! Everyone put so much thought and creativity into what gifts to bring. Taking the time to explain the story behind the gifts is a fun way to learn more about our peers. Plus, all who participated received three unique gifts by the end of the exchange.



HELPFUL TIPS:

- Announce the event via email to all staff about 3-4 weeks prior; send a reminder email 1-2 weeks prior
- Keep it voluntary and no sign up required
- Consider a potluck on the same day to gather staff together prior to the gift exchange
- Gift theme ideas: favorite DVDs, food items and recipes, books/authors
- Supplies
 - Pre-cut small strips of paper for participants to write their name (3 pieces per expected participant)
 - Pens/pencils
 - Bowl to place names for drawing

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