

## **Creative Ideas for a Fabulous First Day**

by Carol E. Henderson

Everyone loves the excitement of starting a new school year! Even though as homeschoolers we usually don't have new teachers, new classrooms, or new classmates, we still can make our first day special with some creativity and a little planning and preparation.

A week or so before the big day, block off your school room or area from prying eyes while you hang new posters, put up bright decorations, and rearrange desks, shelves, and other personal items. Clean, dust, sweep, and spruce everything up! With the room transformed, now you can plan on special surprises at each student's desk. Wrap new books individually in fun, bright paper and top off with ribbons and bows. Pencils, crayons, and other supplies can also be wrapped. Add a personal touch with a few small gifts, along with a special note or card for each child. When you write, remind them of their strengths, encourage them to work hard in school this year, and tell them how proud you are of them.

Start the day with a favorite breakfast, and then unveil your new school room and all the surprises. Be sure to have your camera handy and take plenty of pictures! You will want to add these to the portfolio of your child's school mementos. After the school portion of the day is done, you can continue the celebration by having a special play day with friends at the park or in your own backyard. Another idea is to finish the day with a dinner that everybody loves, followed by a birthday-style celebration. Bring out a cake decorated for the occasion, including candles for each child to blow out. If you're musical, you could sing "Happy First Day of School..." to the tune of "Happy Birthday."

By going out of your way just a little bit, you will not only create memories that will last a lifetime, you will also increase your child's excitement about having school at home. As an added bonus, your child will have something fun to tell his friends when they share with each other about their first day.