

# **16 Holiday Projects for Kindergarten –Eighth Grade**

*Using Word, Excel, Publisher, KidPix, TuxPaint, Web 2.0 Tools and  
more*

*By Jacqui Murray*

*“Ask a Tech Teacher”*

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*16 Holiday Projects for K-8*

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## Introduction

Hi fellow tech teacher! My name is Jacqui Murray. The holiday season is a special time of year. Students are especially motivated to learn new material if it includes holiday themes, images and materials.

Each of these seventeen holiday projects have been tested on thousands of students in my classroom and those of my colleagues. They're everything you'll need to integrate the holidays into classroom units. While students learn new skills, they'll be preparing memories they and their parents will cherish for years. If you own the eight-volume [Structured Learning](#) technology curriculum, you've seen some of these, but many are new. I know you'll enjoy this collection.

For more ideas on how to teach fun, effective technology to students K-8, visit [Ask a Tech Teacher](#)©. Please join the conversation by following [my blog](#) and [follow me](#) on Twitter

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## About the Author

*Jacqui Murray* has been teaching K-8 technology for fifteen years. She's the editor of a technology curriculum for K-fifth grade and creator of two technology training books for middle school. She is webmaster for five blogs, an *Amazon Vine Voice* book reviewer, a tech columnist for [Examiner.com](http://Examiner.com), on the Editorial Review Board for ISTE's *Journal for Computing Teachers*, and an *Innovate My School* tech expert. She is also the author of **Building a Midshipman**, the story of her daughter's journey from high school to United States Naval Academy midshipman. Contact Jacqui at her *writing office* or her tech lab, *Ask a Tech Teacher*.

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## Creating Holiday Shapes with Excel

Excel is a sure way to get students excited about math. Start with drawing simple pictures (because youngers love art). It's easier in Excel than on blank paper because Excel's grid lines are like graph paper. As students get older, use Excel to introduce the concept of graphs, grids, cells, rows, columns, coordinates, scale, etc.


- Open Excel. Provide an overview of Excel rows, columns, toolbars, start page.
- Older students: Set the cells as squares to simulate graph paper. This is done by selecting the entire worksheet (click the cell at the intersection of column A and row 1).

★★★★★★★★★★  
Grade: 2-6  
Prep: Intro to Excel  
Time: 45 minutes for  
grades 3-6, 2-  
45 minute  
sessions for  
grade 2  
Req'd: Excel

★★★★★★★★★★

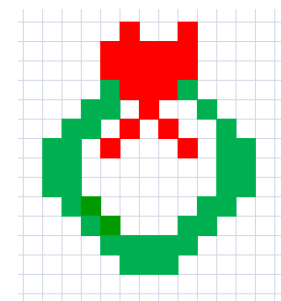
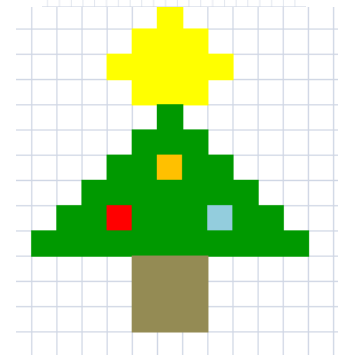
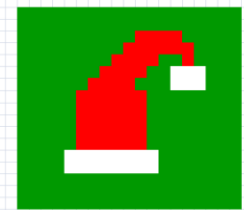
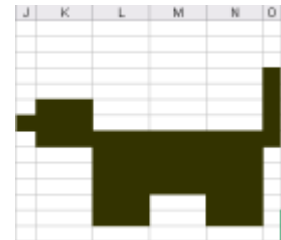
Now click the line between column A and B to find pixel width (probably 64). Click the line between row 1 and 2 and drag it down until it, too, is 64. This changes row width for the entire

spreadsheet.

- Have students select a cell. Click the fill tool . Show them

how to change the color with the drop-down arrow. Recolor.

- Color cells until they have created a square. Color more squares until it becomes a rectangle.
- Now have students create their own drawings, using a variety of colors and cells. Use critical thinking skills to determine which cells and what colors to choose.
- Encourage students to resize the rows and columns as needed to make drawings more realistic.
- Have students create the following holiday shapes: a holiday tree, a wreath, a Santa hat, a reindeer (see insets)
- Let them create their own shapes that makes them think of the holidays



### Extensions

- Students can add autoshapes and freeform lines to enhance drawings.

### Troubleshooting Tips

- *I don't like the fill I used (Ctrl+Z to undo, or select the cell and change the fill color to 'no fill'.)*
- *How do I select multiple cells at once? (Ctrl+click on each additional cell)*

Max  
Mrs. X  
12/2/08

Dear Mother and Father

I remember last

**Christmas**, when

**THE NEW PUPPY** was my present. I

didn't even hope you have a

great



Christmas.



love **max**

ps I appreciate what



you **have done**  
**for me.**

For older grades:

- A heading
- A greeting
- A body
- A closing
- Correct grammar and spelling
- A border
- Color pictures

For younger grades:

- A brief greeting
- A closing
- Child's picture (from home or school)
- A KidPix frame around picture
- Paint bucket fill (3<sup>rd</sup> bucket)



## A Holiday Vacation Timecard in Excel

Students create a timecard from a template as an introduction to Excel. Have students fill a hard copy of the template out at home, then transcribe the data to a digital copy at school that includes hidden formulas. They'll be amazed to see the time automatically calculate. Olders can create the formulas themselves.

Excel is a spreadsheet program used to record/manipulate data and display it as graphs, charts, tables, timelines, etc. It is considered daunting even to adults. This inquiry-based timecard project is a fun intro to Excel (a bit more complicated than *Creating Shapes*).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Grade: 3-8  
 Prep: Intro to Excel;  
 one prior project (like  
 gingerbread house)  
 Time: 45 minutes  
 Req'd: Excel

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- Add a list of holiday activities to a spreadsheet template like the one on the next page (free download available). Give students a hard copy and ask them to track how many minutes per day they spend on each during the holiday vacation (calculations must be done in minutes because the formulas calculate in minutes). If students have different activities than are listed, have them add those to the list.

- Bring the completed form to class after the holiday.
- Open a Timecard template in Excel. Review Excel and the 'Total' cells that calculate weekly sums. Show

students how each cell appears as written, except the one for formulas. Those start with = and a string of identifiers.

- Show students how to add 'Name', 'Grade', 'Date', and 'Teacher' into the correct field. If they added any activities (i.e., 'Practiced violin'), show them how to add those fields to the spreadsheet.
- Enter data **in minutes** in activity's daily cell. Have students notice how the 'total' fields auto-calculate and automatically divide by 60, to adjust total to hours.
- Add picture at top and one of each activity in spot allocated for that.
- Before submitting, have students use checklist to be sure they completed all requirements (see next pages).

### Extensions

- For those who finish early, show them how to adjust fonts/colors/sizes of activities to their preference

### Troubleshooting Tips

- *When I type my name, there's no underline. And, it pushes the line out. (Change 'insert' on the keyboard to overtype. Then, highlight your text and push Ctrl+U to underline.)*

| Activity Description          | M | T | W | Th | F | Sa | Su | Total Hours |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|-------------|
| Eating                        |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Sleeping                      |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Studying                      |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Watching TV                   |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Playing with Friends          |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Playing with Family           |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Family Chores                 |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Practicing Musical Instrument |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Playing a Sport               |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Talking on the Phone          |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.00        |
| Your choice                   |   |   |   |    |   |    |    | 0.84        |



**Notes/Instructions:**

- 1 Record the amount of minutes you spend performing each listed activity each day
- 2 For example, if you spend 1 hour studying on Wednesday, put a '60' under 'W' in the chart
- 3 Keep track of your activities for one week
- 4 Bring the completed form to your next week computer class.



# Timecard Template in Excel

For a downloadable file, go to <http://smaatechk-3.wikispaces.com/Timecard>

|    | A   | C | D | E             | G | H    | I    | J    | K    | L    | M    | N    | O           | P           | Q | R   |  |  |
|----|---|---|---|---------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|-------------|---|---|--|--|
| 3  | <h1 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Activity Timecard</h1>                               |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |  |  |  |
| 5  |   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 7  | Name _____  |   |   | Date _____    |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 8  | Grade _____   |   |   | Teacher _____ |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 9  | Activity Description  |   |   |               |   | M    | T    | W    | Th   | F    | Sa   | Su   | Total Hours |             |   |   |  |  |
| 10 | Eating     |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 11 | Sleeping <i>Insert Picture</i>  |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 12 | Studying <i>Insert Picture</i>  |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 13 | Watching TV <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 14 | Playing with Friends <i>Insert Picture</i>  |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 15 | Playing with Family <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 16 | Family Chores <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 17 | Practicing Musical Instrument <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 18 | Playing a Sport <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 19 | Talking on the Phone <i>Insert Picture</i>  |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 20 | Your choice <i>Insert Picture</i>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.00        |             |   |   |  |  |
| 21 |   |   |   |               |   | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00        | <b>0.00</b> |   |   |  |  |
| 22 |   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 23 | <b><u>Notes and Remarks</u></b>   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 24 | 1 Record the amount of minutes you spend performing each listed activity each day           |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 25 | 2 For example, if you spend 1 hour studying on Wednesday, put a '60' under 'W' in the chart |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 26 | 3 Keep track of your activities for one week  |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 27 | 4 Bring the completed form to your next week computer class.                                |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |
| 28 |   |   |   |               |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |             |             |   |   |  |  |

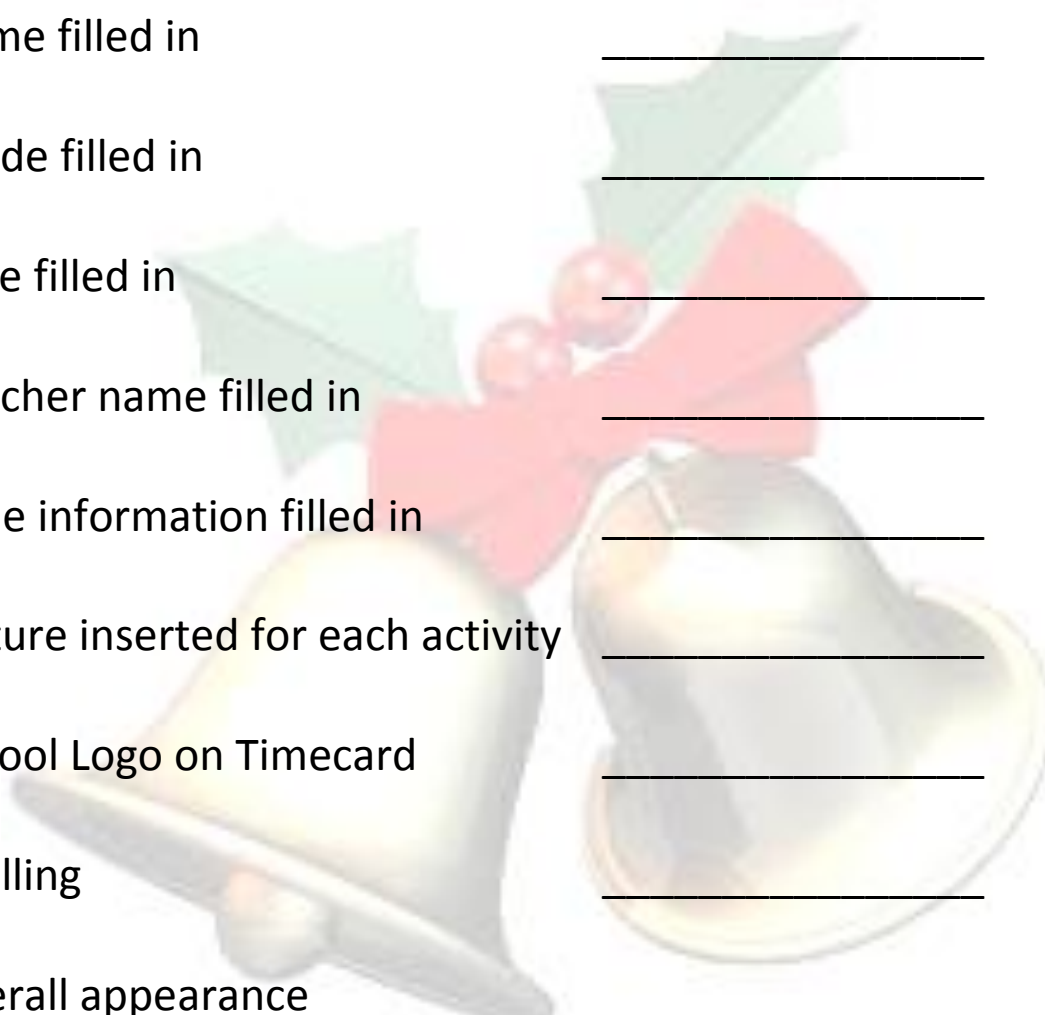
# TIMECARD

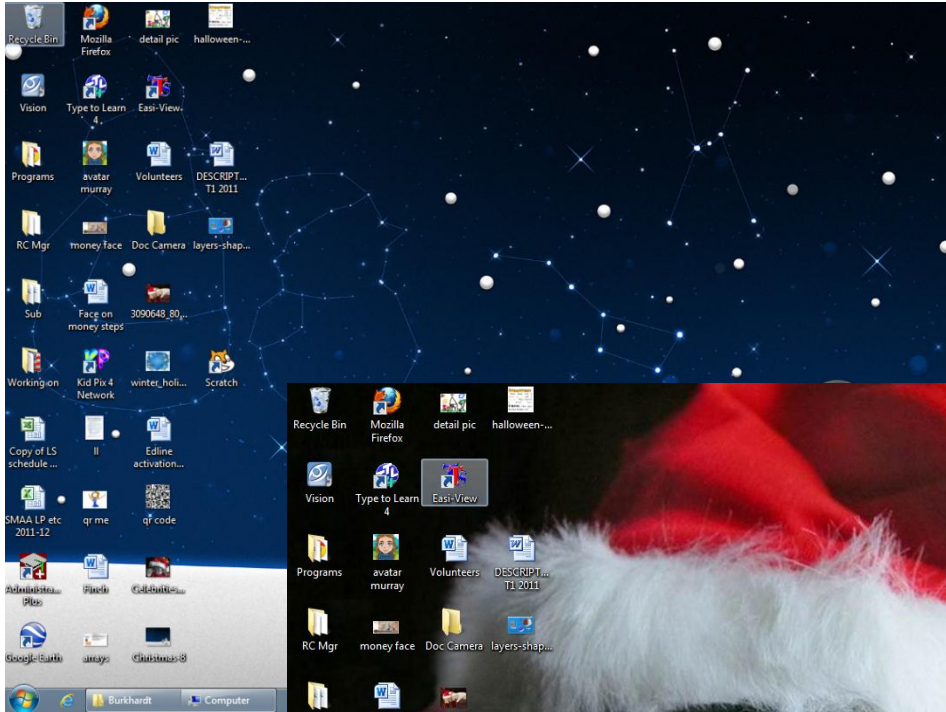
## *Grading Rubric*

Creator \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

- Name filled in \_\_\_\_\_
- Grade filled in \_\_\_\_\_
- Date filled in \_\_\_\_\_
- Teacher name filled in \_\_\_\_\_
- Time information filled in \_\_\_\_\_
- Picture inserted for each activity \_\_\_\_\_
- School Logo on Timecard \_\_\_\_\_
- Spelling \_\_\_\_\_
- Overall appearance \_\_\_\_\_







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| Which book?                               | Price (print/ebooks)  | Quantity | Total |
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| <i>1<sup>st</sup> Grade Tech Textbook</i> | \$22.99/\$12.99       |          |       |
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| <i>4<sup>th</sup> Grade Tech Textbook</i> | \$22.99/\$15.99       |          |       |
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