

New product sold at Joseph-Beth make lunches fun for kids

Created by Living Magazines mom!

Kristi Kane Benson does not remember the first riddle card she put into her eldest child's lunch more than a decade ago, but she does have a favorite riddle card among the thousands she has written since then.

The small cards, which she cut from heavy card stock paper, contained riddles, jokes and special notes to her three children as they went off to school each day with their packed lunches. Each note was closed with a sticker and tucked into the lunch bags. "I wanted to brighten their day a bit more by connecting with them over lunch," said Kristi, who left her publishing career to stay home with her kids.

"I thought a small card with a riddle and a personal note would allow me to reach out to them even though I was at home and they were in the school cafeteria."

The cards worked and, in fact, brightened the day of the other children who sat at the lunch tables with her kids. Friends could not wait to hear the new riddle cards and try to guess the answers.

"What kind of table has no legs?"

Answer: A times table!"

"What is full of holes but holds water?"

Answer: A sponge!"

"I liked that the riddle cards got kids talking and thinking about words and concepts in riddles and seeing the humor," said Kristi. "Together they helped each other figure out the answers and discuss why it was funny. They weren't intended to be educational, exactly, but they were in a way."

The cards were a hit at the lunch tables and soon became a staple of her children's lunches over the years - along with the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, juice boxes and carrots.

At the end of her first school year, Beth - Kristi's oldest daughter who is now 19 - presented her with a bag containing all the riddle cards her mom put into her lunches that year. They became collector's items.

One mother asked Kristi at a school

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Kristi Kane Benson shares some riddles with school kids over lunch.

event about the cards and where she might buy them, only to learn they were not a product for sale. Kristi decided others might also be interested in having riddle cards for their kids, especially if they were ready-made.

So, last year Kristi - now an advertising representative for our own Living Magazines - put her publishing background and graphic design degree from the University of Cincinnati's DAAP College to work to create a product busy parents could buy that replicated the cards she handmade for her own kids. Thus The Lunch Cards were born.

"I wanted to find a way to make it easy for busy parents to brighten the day of their children by simply selecting and signing a riddle card for their child's lunch," she said.

The Lunch Cards have 45 riddles in one of each themes: Classics & Brain Teasers, Sports, Nature & Animals and

School/Holidays/Vacations. The riddles have been called "corny but adorable," and Kristi finds that adults also enjoy the riddles and often try to figure out the answer. She has put them into her husband's lunches and has sent them to friends and family.

"What is a cat's favorite color? Answer: Purrrple!"

"What does a runner lose when he wins a race? Answer: His breath!"

The Lunch Cards have now become a small enterprise for Kristi and her husband Andy. They are available for purchase at Joseph-Beth. For more information, visit www.thelunchcards.com.

"It's been fun creating a new product and business," Kristi said, but mostly, she adds, it is gratifying to see her idea made into reality.

Her favorite riddle?

"What do liars do when they're dead?" Answer: "Lie still."



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