Peeking Package Card

To make this pretty package card, you will need: scissors, construction paper, markers or crayons, a photo of yourself, glue, and ribbon or yarn.

1. Cut a rectangle, 4" x 8" (10 x 20 cm), out of construction paper and fold it in half (see illustration). Decorate the outside of your card with markers or crayons to make it look like wrapping paper.
2. Open the card and glue a picture of yourself inside (see illustration). Let the glue dry.
3. Close the card and carefully mark on the outside of the card where the eyes on the photo line up. Then cut a flap in the top of the card so the eyes can look out. You may need to ask an adult for help.
4. Cut pieces of ribbon or yarn the length and width of the card. Glue the pieces on the front side of the card like ribbon on a package. Be careful not to cover the eyehole.
5. Write a message for a friend or family member inside. (This same idea can also work with snowman cards. Just make sure the eyes on your picture are in the same place as the snowman’s eyes.)

Red Beans and Rice Soup

4 slices of bacon
2 celery stalks
1 leek
1 green bell pepper
4 cans red kidney beans (drained) (6 cups)
1 teaspoon thyme
6 cups water
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 cups cooked rice

1. Chop the bacon, celery, leek, and bell pepper into small pieces.
2. Combine the chopped ingredients, beans, thyme, and water in a large pot.
3. Add salt and pepper to the mixture. Stir in rice and serve.
Serves 8.

Cook over medium heat until boiling. Cover the soup, adjust the heat to low, and let it simmer for 40 minutes or until vegetables are soft.
Chinese Noodle Cookies

3 cups chocolate chips
3 cups butterscotch chips
1/2 cup crunchy peanut butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup peanuts
2 1/2 cups crisp chow mein noodles

1. Place the chocolate and butterscotch chips in a medium saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until melted.
2. Take the mixture off the stove. Mix in the peanut butter and vanilla.
3. Gently stir in the peanuts and noodles.
4. Using a tablespoon, scoop heaping-tablespoon-sized chunks of the mixture onto sheets of foil. Freeze until solid.
Makes about 2 dozen.

White Hot Chocolate

1 cup milk
2 tablespoons white-chocolate instant pudding mix
Optional: whipped cream, marshmallow cream, or crushed peppermint candy

1. Place milk in a saucepan and heat over medium heat until hot.
2. With a wire whisk, stir in the pudding mix.
3. Add whipped cream, marshmallow cream, or crushed peppermint candy, if desired.
Makes one serving.

Cloved Oranges

To make this scrumptious-smelling decoration, you will need: an orange, a large nail, whole cloves, and ribbon or yarn (optional).

1. Use the nail to carefully poke a design into the skin of the orange. Be as creative as you want! Your design could also be someone's name, an ornament, or a bell.
2. Carefully push a whole clove into each hole, leaving the head of the clove sticking out. Place several cloved oranges on a table for a colorful decoration that makes the whole room smell good! If desired, tie a piece of ribbon or yarn around the orange like a package. Add a loop to the top for hanging.