

# The Gift



By [borderlessgl](https://borderlessjournal.com/author/borderlessgl/)

<https://borderlessjournal.com/author/borderlessgl/>



[August 14, 2025 < https://borderlessjournal.com/2025/08/14/the-gift-2/ >](https://borderlessjournal.com/2025/08/14/the-gift-2/)

*By Naramsetti Umamaheswararao*

It was a science class for the 9th grade. All the students were listening attentively as the teacher was explaining the lesson. Just as there were 15 minutes left for the bell to ring, the attendant walked in with the notice register.

After sending him away, the teacher looked at the class. He noticed Ramu and Gopi sitting at the back and talking to each other.

“Children! Are you all listening?” the teacher asked aloud.

All the students except Ramu and Gopi raised their hands to show they were paying attention.

The teacher felt that Ramu and Gopi were talking about something more important than the class. Curious, he quietly walked over to them.

At that moment, Ramu was saying, “Mohan’s gift wasn’t liked by anyone at our home.”

“I thought it would be something valuable because he told me he would give a special gift,” replied Gopi.

“You didn’t come to our new housewarming ceremony, so you don’t know. Honestly, I feel a bit embarrassed to talk about it,” Ramu said sadly.

Hearing Mohan’s name in their conversation, the teacher felt it was something worth discussing. He gently tapped their desk with a stick and asked them to explain what they were talking about.

Mohan was a smart and well-behaved student, so the teacher was surprised to hear any complaints about him.

“Ramu had invited his friends for the housewarming a few days ago. I couldn’t go,” said Gopi. “But we were just talking about how the gift Mohan gave wasn’t good when you came, sir.”

“I see... what kind of gifts did the other students give?” asked the teacher.

“They gave useful household items,” replied Ramu.

“And what did Mohan give you?” asked the teacher.

“A mango plant,” said Ramu with a laugh.

The whole class burst out laughing. The teacher looked at Mohan, who bowed his head in embarrassment.

The teacher scolded the students and asked, “How can you say that a plant is not a good gift?”

Ramu replied, “To grow a plant, you need space. You have to water it every day. If it grows into a tree, its leaves will fall everywhere. Cleaning up is hard. It would have been better if he gave something else.”

“So, is that all you know about plants?” asked the teacher.

“Growing and maintaining a plant is difficult,” said Ramu again.

The teacher turned to the class and asked, “Is Ramu right?” The students nodded.

Then the teacher told Mohan to stand up and asked, “You said you would give a valuable gift, but you gave a plant. Why?”

Mohan answered, “The other gifts may break or become useless after a while. But a plant won’t. That’s why I chose it.”

“Tell us more about why you think it’s valuable,” the teacher encouraged him.

Mohan began to explain: “When a plant grows into a tree, it gives us many benefits. It absorbs the carbon dioxide we breathe out and gives us oxygen in return. Trees give us clean air to live. Their branches and leaves spread out to give us shade. People rest under trees to cool down. That’s why trees are important.

“If this mango plant becomes a tree, it can give us mangoes. Raw mangoes can be used for pickles and other dishes. Ripe mangoes are tasty fruits. A tree can give fruits worth thousands of rupees in its lifetime. We can eat the fruits or share them with relatives. The branches can be used as firewood. Even the dried leaves can be used to cook food. There are so many benefits. That’s why I gave a plant. I hoped Ramu would understand.”

“Is that all? Most people know these things. Tell us what science says about plants,” said the teacher, encouraging him further.

Mohan continued: “Cutting trees reduces forests. Because of that, rainfall is not coming on time. Pollution is increasing. Holes are forming in the ozone layer, and the Earth is becoming hotter. If we give plants as gifts and grow more trees, it helps society. If every citizen does this, we can enjoy green

nature. It also reduces air pollution caused by too many vehicles. People will become healthier.”

“Well said! You explained it beautifully. I’m proud to say you’re my student,” said the teacher, clapping.

The class clapped too, just as the bell rang.

Looking at Ramu, the teacher asked, “Now tell me, was Mohan’s gift a good one?”

Ramu replied, “I couldn’t understand the value of the gift before. I behaved wrongly. Mohan’s gift is truly valuable.”

The teacher concluded, “Children, be wise. If you want to give a gift to someone, give them a book... or a plant!”

“Yes, sir!” the whole class replied loudly.

At that moment, the next class bell rang.