

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION

BIBA KAYEWICH

POSITIVE MINDSET

## The Healing Power of Gratitude

Giving thanks boosts your mental, emotional, and physical health

▲ Listing three blessings every day in a gratitude journal creates a habit of thankfulness for the small moments that bring joy.

**When we choose gratitude, we often find that hope, courage, and other helpful emotions join in to strengthen us.**

GREGORY JANTZ

**T**he holiday season provides an annual reminder to pause and be grateful for all we have. That reminder is needed and helpful because it's human nature to focus instead on all of the things we don't have.

The culture we live in bombards us with messages that we should have more, do more, and be more. Driven strongly by social media and advertisements, we're conditioned to believe that what we have isn't enough. That's a recipe for discontent, depression, and despair.

That's also why it's so important to incorporate gratitude into our lives during the holidays—and every day throughout the year.

As a mental health professional for 35 years, I've counseled hundreds of people struggling with anxiety, depression, addictions, relationship problems, and

other serious challenges. Almost always, the practice of gratitude is emphasized in treatment as a step toward wellness and health.

I've come to believe that gratitude is the antidote for every toxic thing that comes into our lives. Simply put, gratitude fosters optimism, which strengthens hope. Whether your life includes serious difficulties or is relatively stable, the practice of giving thanks is sure to fortify and enrich your life. Here are some reasons why.

### The Science of Gratitude

Gratitude promotes wellness in numerous ways. Over the past few decades, social scientists have accumulated a body of research demonstrating how gratitude enhances well-being: improved self-esteem, better sleep, boosted immunity, decreased depression, reduced anxiety, stronger relationships, and more.

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## How 2 Famous Authors Started the Thanksgiving Turkey Tradition

A Thanksgiving without a turkey is like a Christmas without a tree

DUSTIN BASS

George Washington noted that it was “the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly implore his protection and favor.” This was stated at the beginning of his Thanksgiving Day proclamation, which he issued on October 3, 1789. Through the proclamation, Washington assigned the country's first Thanksgiving Day to take place Nov. 26 so that Americans as a whole could “unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks.”

However, for the next 74 years, this “more perfect Union” was less than perfect in celebrating simultaneously. Thanksgiving Day across the States was generally celebrated at any given time between October and January. Regardless, Americans now had a day to set aside to focus solely on being thankful for their blessings. But what would this day look like?

### Charles Dickens and the Prize Turkey

Early Americans could reference the Pilgrims and Indians of the first Thanksgiving in 1621 at Plymouth. According to colonist William Bradford's journal, that season they had waterfowl, a “great store of wild turkeys,” along with deer and Indian corn. Turkey is mentioned almost in passing, so it isn't definitively known if turkey was served during this special occasion.

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Detail, “The First Thanksgiving, 1621,” by J.L.G. Ferris.



## POSITIVE MINDSET

# The Healing Power of Gratitude

Giving thanks boosts your mental, emotional, and physical health

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Two leading gratitude researchers, Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough, have extensively studied the benefits of being thankful for daily blessings.

"When people are grateful, they experience 'calm energy'—they feel more alert, alive, interested, enthusiastic," Emmons said.

Research by Emmons and McCullough includes asking study participants to keep a gratitude journal in which they record at least three things per day that they're thankful for. Results found that people who stick with this activity score 25 percent higher on surveys that measure happiness, sleep a half-hour longer most nights, and exercise 33 percent more every week than those who don't make gratitude a daily practice.

What's more, researchers at Harvard University conducted an analysis of numerous studies and concluded: "In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships."

Gratitude is something we can control in our lives. Gratitude isn't simply a response we feel when things go right. It's a deliberate attitude we choose even when they don't. It's the decision to consciously acknowledge the many things in our lives that are good, enjoyable, and beneficial. Because, no matter how trying your circumstances, there's always something to notice and appreciate.

Many things in life we have little or no control over: inflation, being downsized from a job, an out-of-the-blue diagnosis, and political and social strife. So much is beyond our individual control—but not so with gratitude. It's a matter of making a choice, consistently and genuinely.

Gratitude "recruits" other positive emotions. When we choose gratitude, and we often find that hope, courage, and other helpful emotions join in to strengthen us. When we take the time to be thankful, joy and contentment spring up as well. Negative emotions—such as anger, jealousy, greed, and fear—all lose power when pitted against gratitude.

Likeminded emotions tend to cluster together. Choose gratitude and you'll soon notice that it lifts the tide of many other emotions.

Gratitude shifts our focus from negative to positive. We all have far more to be thankful for than we realize. Problems always make the most noise in our lives, so we give them our attention. Purposefully cultivating gratitude quickly reveals that trouble isn't all we have.

When we're hurting, our thoughts and emotions are drawn to the source of pain like iron chips to a magnet. We dwell on our own weaknesses, poor decisions, and disappointments. However, choosing to be thankful draws our thoughts and emotions away from our distress and places them on our blessings.

Gratitude reveals the bright side in dark times. True gratitude goes much deeper than the clichés that say, "Every dark cloud has a silver lining" or "Look at the glass as half full, not half empty." Even the bleakest of circumstances and toughest situations hold legitimate reasons to be thankful. Appreciating



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even the smallest of blessings helps you withstand the pain of loneliness, broken relationships, and dashed dreams.

We can choose to say, "I will resent" or "I will rejoice." Our decision makes all the difference between experiencing the freedom to move forward or being bound up by bitterness. When we seize the opportunity to express gratitude, we take hold of a weapon that will help us prevail over resentment and disappointment.

Gratitude expands exponentially. I've noticed countless times that depressed people tend to look for things to be depressed about. Everywhere, they see more and more reasons to be depressed. The same principle applies to those struggling with anxiety and other emotional challenges.

Thankfully, the opposite is also true. The more we intentionally practice gratitude, the more we'll find to be grateful for. The choices we make and the things we seek out build momentum for the positive or the negative. Seek and you shall find.

This concept has a connection to our physiology. Researcher Alex Kolb examined several scientific studies on the link between gratitude and mental health and concluded the following: "Feelings of gratitude directly activated brain regions associated with the neurotransmitter dopamine [a 'feel-good' chemical]. ... Gratitude can have such a powerful impact on your life because it engages your brain in a virtuous cycle. ... And the dopamine reinforces that as well. So once you start seeing things to be grateful for, your brain starts looking for more things to be grateful for. That's how the virtuous cycle gets created."

## Grow Your Gratitude

Sometimes, your personal troubles make it hard to muster gratitude. Plus, it's not always easy to practice daily gratitude amid a culture of stress, busyness, and discontent. If you want to boost the level of thankfulness in your life, start with these ideas:

Notice small moments that bring you joy. Try saying thanks for your favorite

"Look at the world through a child's eyes. Children don't fret about the future, nor do they dwell in the past. They appreciate the present moment, with all of its opportunities and pleasures."

**I've come to believe that gratitude is the antidote for every toxic thing that comes into our lives.**

**Every day is an opportunity to steer your life in a new direction and find blessings.**

movie, crisp leaves on a fall day, the taste of your favorite tea, the phone call from your best friend, the sound of a giggling child, or the chance to sleep in on a Saturday morning.

Keep a gratitude journal. Spend a few minutes each day listing three blessings in your life and describe how you're enriched by them. Naming the things you're thankful for each day will cause you to see more and more.

Take a fresh look at friends and family. The people closest to us are sometimes taken for granted. Count your blessings for those who love and support you.

Celebrate creativity. Every day, our lives are enhanced by artistic expression—music, literature, cinema, and theater. Be grateful you live in such a rich and textured creative culture.

Make daily rituals special. Sit and enjoy your morning coffee rather than quaffing it down as you hurry out the door. If walking your dog is typically boring for you, change your mindset and notice how much fun your pooch is having.

Look at the world through a child's eyes. Children don't fret about the future, nor do they dwell in the past. They appreciate the present moment, with all of its opportunities and pleasures.

Give a compliment to someone. By thinking about who and what you'll praise, you'll appreciate that individual and the quality you admire.

Pray or meditate. These practices shut out the noisy world and focus your thoughts on a power much bigger than yourself. Make thankfulness a big part of your prayer or meditation time.

Mine today for possibility. Every day is an opportunity to steer your life in a new direction and find blessings. Believe it's true. Get out of bed tomorrow morning and go look for it.

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## How 2 Famous Authors Started the Thanksgiving Turkey Tradition

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Just as the English played a role—to say the least—in both the founding of the Plymouth colony and the American Revolution, an English writer by the name of Charles Dickens played a substantial role in placing the turkey as the focal point for holiday meals.

In his classic morality tale, "A Christmas Carol," the wealthy but miserly Ebenezer Scrooge pays his employee, Bob Cratchit, so little that he can't afford a turkey for Christmas dinner. The most the poor family can afford is a goose. It isn't until the end of the story, when Scrooge has been given a supernatural opportunity to peruse his past, present, and future, that he decides to make amends for his ill doings. His first thought is to help the Cratchits, and, luckily for him, it's the perfect time to do it—Christmas Day.

When Scrooge lifts open the window on Christmas morning, he sees a young boy walking by and inquires about the turkey that was hanging in the window at the "Poulterer's" on the corner.

"Do you know whether they've sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there?—Not the little prize Turkey: the big one?" ... "It's hanging there now," replied the boy.

Scrooge then promised the boy a half-a-crown if he returned with the poulterer and turkey in "less than five minutes."

"It was a Turkey! He never could have stood upon his legs, that bird. He would have snapped 'em short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax."

As Mark Connelly, professor of modern British history at the University of Kent, once wrote, "The tale conjures up the image of a perfect and nostalgic Victorian Christmas, full of turkey, mistletoe and goodwill."

According to Cathy Kaufman, chair of the Culinary Historians of New York, the British believed that "Christmas was ill suited for the urban industrial world," which rather characterizes the setting of Dickens's book: London. In America, Christmas was viewed nearly the same—except perhaps in the South, where southerners often celebrated the 12 days of Christmas.

After the publication of his book, Christmas in Britain returned to its earlier medieval traditions, where the holiday was celebrated for more than a single day and the feasts were extensive. As Kaufman wrote, "Dickens's 'Christmas Carol' put a benign face on Christmas, focusing on a quaint and quiet Victorian family holiday, punctuated by small acts of voluntary charity."

## Dickens in America

When the book was released in America in January 1844, the change, according to a lecture given by William Makepeace Thackeray in 1852, was evidently more impactful as it created "a wonderful outpouring of Christmas good-feeling; of Christmas punch-brewing; an awful slaughter of Christmas turkeys, and roasting and basting of Christmas beef."

The turkey is only mentioned once at



BRENT HOFACKER/SHUTTERSTOCK

Turkey was not always the bird of choice for Thanksgiving holiday.

**Hale believed Thanksgiving should take place on a specific day every year.**



Sarah Josepha Hale, the American writer, activist, and editor of Godey's Lady's Book who campaigned for Thanksgiving to become a national holiday. PUBLIC DOMAIN



Charles Dickens, the English writer and social critic whose book, "A Christmas Carol," was influential in establishing turkey as the iconic centerpiece for holiday meals. PUBLIC DOMAIN

the end of "A Christmas Carol," and the reader never witnesses the final dinner at the Cratchit home. "All we know is that Scrooge sent Cratchit the biggest turkey in the poulterer's shop," Kaufman surmises. "It was also the food image that resonated most deeply in America."

Turkey, which is an American bird, became even more prominent in the United States after the Dickens tale. But in 1844, Thanksgiving was still celebrated in different months according to state, and turkey had yet to become the "food image" of choice for the holiday. It took an American author to combine those two.

## Hale and the Start of an American Tradition

Sarah Josepha Hale was one of the most influential people on 19th century American culture. She was born in 1788, the year the Constitution was ratified, and nearly an exact year before Washington made his Thanksgiving proclamation. As a widow and mother of five, her first novel, "Northwood; Or, Life North and South: Showing the True Character of Both," was published in 1827—16 years before Dickens's "A Christmas Carol." Her novel's success opened the door for her to become editor of Godey's Lady's Book, an influential magazine. Under her leadership, magazine subscriptions increased 15-fold, from 10,000 to 150,000.

The magazine significantly influenced American fashion, etiquette, and food. As editor, she also wrote a monthly column. In 1846, she began pushing for Thanksgiving to become a national holiday. She wrote every president from Zachary Taylor to Abraham Lincoln, insisting on the creation of a national Thanksgiving Day holiday.

Presidents after Washington had issued Thanksgiving proclamations before. Even Lincoln had issued one in 1861, another in 1862, and a third in the summer of 1863. The 1863 proclamation was issued mid-July and indicated August 6 to be "observed as a day of National thanksgiving, praise, and prayer" and for citizens "to assemble on that occasion in their customary places of worship."

Hale believed Thanksgiving should take place on a specific day every year. She sent a letter to Lincoln on Sept. 28, 1863, stating that "for some years past, there has been an

increasing interest felt in our land to have the Thanksgiving held on the same day, in all the States; it now needs National recognition and authoritative fixation, only, to become permanently, an American custom and institution."

Five days later, Lincoln issued a new proclamation stating: "It has seemed to me fit and proper that [these bounties] should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens."

The following year, Lincoln issued another proclamation for Thanksgiving Day to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November. It would be the first time the holiday was celebrated across the States on the same day in consecutive years. The date would not change until 1939, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt proclaimed the second to last Thursday to be Thanksgiving Day in an attempt to boost the economy by extending the holiday shopping season.

## The Thanksgiving Template

When it came to what this "glorious Festival" should look like, Hale had already provided an intricate portrait in her novel:

"The table, covered with a damask cloth ... was now intended for the whole household, every child having a seat on this occasion, and the more the better, it being considered an honor for a man to sit down to his Thanksgiving supper surrounded by a large family."

Hale went on to discuss the food, which included a sirloin of beef, leg of pork, joint of mutton, chicken pie, bowls of gravy, plates of vegetables, pickles, preserves, butter, wheat bread, plumb pudding, custards, pies, cakes, sweetmeats, fruits, currant wine, ciders, and ginger beer. But it was the turkey that stood out at this fictional, yet influential Thanksgiving table.

"The roasted turkey took precedence on this occasion, being placed at the head of the table; and well did it become its lordly station, sending forth the rich odour of its savoury stuffing, and finely covered with the frost of the basting."

According to the New England Historical Society, Hale's description of the Thanksgiving Day table setting "became a template for the rest of the country."

Although Hale had written her book 16 years before Dickens wrote his, it was Dickens who, according to one food critic, "popularized a prized Christmas turkey ... replacing the traditional goose with a more iconic bird." Twenty-six years after "A Christmas Carol" reached the shores of America, Congress passed a bill making Thanksgiving Day a national holiday. Washington and Lincoln may have put into words precisely the purpose behind Thanksgiving, but it was Dickens and Hale who influenced the way we celebrate it.

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## FAMILY Simplifying Christmas Shopping for Your Kids

Christmas gifts don't have to be elaborate and expensive to be magical

### BARBARA DANZA

Parents tend to bend over backward to make Christmas magical for their children. Their hearts are, of course, in the right place. Despite their best intentions, however, many overdo it when it comes to purchasing gifts and can regret the sheer quantity (not to mention cost) of their over-zealous shopping.

Just like you can have too much ice cream and chocolate cake, your children can have too many Christmas presents. An overwhelming amount of stuff detracts from the beauty of each individual gift and from the spirit of the season.

As you make your list this year, be sure to check it twice and aim for quality over quantity. Here are some ideas to keep your children's gift list simple without sacrificing any bit of magic.

### Choose a Theme

Perhaps you have a trip coming up or your children have developed a particular interest of late. Choosing a theme to focus your

gifts on can help narrow your choices and ensure meaningful and useful gifts that everyone can be excited about.

If there's a theme for each child or a theme that works for the family as a whole, run with it.

### Experiences Over Things

Thinking of booking a family adventure? Make that a Christmas present. Interest-specific lessons, theme park tickets, theater tickets, museum passes—gifts like these, especially when they center on the child's individual interests, are exciting to receive. Not only do they reduce the clutter in your home, but they also offer something to look forward to, enjoy, and remember for a lifetime.

### One Big Treat

Rather than a million little toys to open on Christmas morning, go for the one big item. Focusing on the joy of a singular, special gift is so much better than rushing through unwrapping a bunch of expected, easily forgotten items. Pare down the quantity and go for one big wow.

### Tools and Consumables

Children today tend to have too many toys, to the point of overwhelm. Rather than adding to the pile, give supplies they can use to make and do things. Art supplies, sewing supplies, bird-watching supplies, woodworking supplies, sports equipment, musical instruments—home in on the activities that light your children up, and then gift them whatever they need to do their thing.



A gift can be simple without sacrificing any of the magic of the season. FAMELO/SHUTTERSTOCK

### Quality Classics

For the littlest gift recipients, Christmas can be a time to provide the fundamental toys that are essential to healthy play. Wooden blocks, beautiful dolls, a play kitchen, bouncy balls, toy vehicles, or a dollhouse are all examples of toys that encourage active and imaginative play. Look for toys that aren't made in China and choose one or two items of the highest possible quality.

### Books

Christmas is a great time to add quality books to your child's library. Stock up on the timeless and classic reads that have been enjoyed for generations.

### When in Doubt

You may have heard parents using the maxim: "Something they want, something they need, something to wear, and something to read." This simple rule of thumb can be a helpful tool to remind you to not overdo your Christmas shopping, keep your children's gifts simple, and maintain focus on the true significance of the season.



# Should Boys Start Kindergarten 1 Year Later Than Girls?



The year of development between the average 5-year-old and the average 6-year-old can make all the difference in attention span, patience, and the ability to learn in a formal didactic setting.

LEONARD SAX

I launched my medical practice in Montgomery County, Maryland, in March 1990. Because I'm both a medical doctor and a doctoral psychologist, my practice soon attracted parents who had concerns about how their kids were doing in school. Beginning in the mid-to-late 1990s, I began to notice a growing cohort of young boys who weren't doing well in the classroom, who said they hated school, beginning in kindergarten. Parents were asking me why their sons hated school so much. As I learned more about each boy's situation, I was surprised to find that our local public school kindergarten was now requiring children to learn to read and write.

I was surprised because when I was a little boy in kindergarten in Shaker Heights, Ohio, in the 1960s, we weren't taught to read and write at all. We played duck, duck, goose. We sang in rounds. We did lots of arts and crafts. We went on field trips to the Shaker Lakes, where I splashed in ponds with my friends as we chased after tadpoles. By the end of kindergarten, I couldn't read a word. I couldn't spell my name. Neither could most of the other kids. Nobody expected us to—kindergarten wasn't about learning to read and write. It was primarily experiential: singing, playing tag, doing arts and crafts, and splashing in ponds.

That's why it surprised me in the late 1990s to learn that our local kindergarten was now all about learning to read and write. "What are they thinking? Don't they know that boys that age aren't ready to sit for an hour and learn about diphthongs?" I wondered. But as I researched the topic, reaching out to colleagues regionally and then nationwide, I learned that this trend was sweeping the country. By 2010, researchers found, the trend was pretty much complete. As late as 1998, only about 30 percent of kindergarten teachers expected their students to be able to read by the end of the school year. By 2010, 80 percent of teachers expected their students to be able to read. Kindergarten had become first grade.

I recall the honors ceremony at my public high school in 1976. Almost every student whose name was called was a boy. The winner of the poetry prize was a boy. The editor of the student newspaper was a boy. The valedictorian and the salutatorian were both boys. Sadly, there were very few girls who won any academic awards. Today, my high school still has an honors ceremony, but now almost all the awardees are girls. Nationwide, 70 percent of high school valedictorians now are female. Women now outnumber men at four-year colleges in the United States by 59 to 41, and women are now substantially more likely than their brothers to graduate from a four-year college. We all applaud the rise of girls in school and at university, but why didn't we level off at around 50-50? Why are boys now greatly under-represented among university students?

I became convinced that the acceleration of the early elementary curriculum, beginning in kindergarten, was part of the problem. So in 2001, I wrote a paper for the American Psychological Association entitled "Reclaiming Kindergarten: Making Kindergarten Less Harmful to Boys." I

began the paper by noting, correctly, that many U.S. kindergartens as of 2001 were now deploying the traditional first-grade curriculum, with a focus on reading and writing. In view of the research (which has since been updated) showing that boys lag substantially behind girls in brain development, I advised that boys start kindergarten at 6 years of age, while girls continue to start at age 5.

When I met with school leaders to promote the idea, I cited the work of Deborah Stipek, the longtime dean of education at Stanford. Stipek has shown that kids develop attitudes toward school very early, by the end of the kindergarten year. And those attitudes, once formed, are global, stable, and noncontingent. That means that the boy who decides at the end of the kindergarten year that he hates school is likely still to hate school years down the road.

Richard Reeves, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, recently published his book "Of Boys and Men: Why the Modern Male Is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It," in which he reviews the avalanche of literature showing that boys are now doing much worse than girls at school and in college. One of his principal recommendations is that boys should start kindergarten one year later than girls. But Reeves asserts that "the main reason for starting boys later is not so that they will be a year older in kindergarten. It is so they will be a year older when they get to middle school and high school." Such a statement not only undermines the argument for starting boys earlier; it overlooks the importance of the early years in child development. (Reeves was gracious enough to mention, in his recent Substack, that I made the same recommendation 21 years earlier.)

Should you start your son in kindergarten at age 6 rather than age 5? What about your daughter? My own views have evolved over the past two decades. I've now visited more than 460 schools over the past 21 years, and I've learned that girls aren't the winners here. The average 5-year-old girl is better able than the average 5-year-old boy to sit still, be quiet, and pay attention for a 40-minute session on phonics. But that doesn't mean it's best practice for that girl to be subjected to such lessons. On the contrary, I've seen firsthand how the acceleration of the early elementary curriculum has resulted in girls who develop an instrumental attitude toward school: They work hard not because they love the content, but to please their parents or to please the teacher. The end result, for some, is girls who are burned out by the time they reach fifth grade. Sometimes, sooner than that.

There's growing evidence that the acceleration of the early curriculum, beginning with pre-K and kindergarten, is harmful to both girls and boys. Kids in Tennessee who won the lottery to attend an academic prekindergarten are actually doing worse years later, in sixth grade, compared to kids who didn't attend. When kids are drilled on academics at 4 and 5 years of age, they lose their enthusiasm for learning. Early childhood educator Erika Christakis, reviewing the evidence in *The Atlantic*, concluded that the "same educational policies that are pushing academic goals down to ever ear-

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The acceleration of the early curriculum, in pre-K and kindergarten, has hurt both boys and girls.



FAMVELD/SHUTTERSTOCK

lier levels seem to be contributing to ... the fact that young children are gaining fewer skills, not more."

So what should you do, if you have a 4-year-old and kindergarten is just around the corner? Ideally, you will want to find a play-based, mostly outdoor kindergarten program, where the focus is on experiential learning across all domains rather than a narrow focus on learning to read and write. Many Waldorf and Montessori schools offer such options. But if no such option is available to you, then I recommend that you give your child the gift of an extra year of childhood and postpone enrolling your child in the modern academic "kindergarten" until she or he is 6 years old. (My wife and I started our own daughter in kindergarten at age 6. She is now 16, and all three of us are glad we made the choice we did.)

There's a huge difference between the average 5-year-old and the average 6-year-old in attention span, patience, and ability to learn in a formal didactic setting. If most schools now insist on teaching the traditional first-grade curriculum to kindergartners, then parents would be well-advised to enroll their children in "kindergarten" at the age when students traditionally enrolled in first grade.

Fifty years ago, boys generally did better in school than girls. There are many reasons driving boys' decline over the past five decades. In my book "Boys Adrift: The Five Factors Driving the Growing Epidemic of Unmotivated Boys and Underachieving Young Men," I make the case, for example, that video games have shifted motivation for many boys away from the classroom to the video game console. As a family doctor, I see firsthand many boys who are more concerned about being the first in their group to complete all the missions in the latest release of "Call of Duty" rather than studying for an exam.

In addition, I argue that the collapse in our social construction of masculinity has had a toxic effect. A generation ago, boys were inspired by the heroes in movies with stars like Gary Cooper, Paul Newman, and Sydney Poitier—actors who portrayed actual men overcoming real-life challenges. Today's movie blockbusters feature cartoon figures, such as Marvel comics characters, who are caricatures of masculinity. Despite their best intentions, boys living in the real world can't deploy superpowers or jump between universes.

But putting those other factors aside, I believe that one reason boys used to do well is that their first experience of school was more often positive than negative because the kindergarten of that era was actually a fun time of interactive play, not an academic boot camp. For boys to catch up to girls today, the first requirement is that boys begin school with a better experience. I still believe that starting "kindergarten" at age 6 rather than age 5—for everybody—might be the right first step.

*This article was originally published on the Institute for Family Studies blog.*

*Dr. Leonard Sax is a practicing family physician and the author of four books for parents, including "Boys Adrift: The Five Factors Driving the Growing Epidemic of Unmotivated Boys and Underachieving Young Men."*

DEAR JUNE *On Family and Relationships*

## Teaching Children Habits and Principles

JUNE KELLUM

Several months ago, I was walking with my three young children in Manhattan when a well-dressed man stopped and, in a brief conversation, entreated me to enjoy them. His son—a teenager—was out of control, it seems, on social media and in life. This encounter renewed my resolve to understand better what I can do as a parent to avoid this outcome. I've written previously that there's much in today's culture that's attractive but not good for our children, and as parents, we need to be on guard. However, we can't shield them forever, so we need to instill in them the wherewithal to resist temptation.

It's my observation that human behavior is motivated by necessity, emotion, habit, or principles. As newborn babies, we naturally act out of necessity, to relieve hunger, cold, and discomfort. Then, as the child grows, emotional factors start to rule behavior. What the child likes or wants becomes a preoccupation. And perhaps you have observed what happens when a child's myriad desires are too often gratified: You end up with a selfish young tyrant.

British educator Charlotte Mason said, "Selfishness is a tyranny hard to escape from," and this I believe to be true because I wrestle with my own. So this is where I see the job of the parent: to help the child develop good habits and the will to live by principles. We need to instill good habits and good principles in them so they don't lose the connection with their moral conscience, which guides their whole being, actions, thoughts, and feelings.

In my experience, this means that we make sure our children do the right thing even if they don't necessarily want to. I know how hard it is to do this every time with young children, but no great feat is ever easily accomplished. As parents, we can't be afraid to make mistakes when teaching our children. Likewise, it's important to have faith in our ability as parents to learn and grow from our mistakes.

One example of this comes from the autobiographical series of pioneer girl Laura Ingalls Wilder. Laura owns only one doll—Charlotte, a rag doll made by her mother. One day, a much younger neighbor girl, Anna, comes over with her mother and it's Laura's job to entertain her while their mothers visit. Laura brings out



Teaching children to live by principles encourages their naturally good desires, such as wanting to love and be loved, learn, serve others, and give.

her doll for the little girl to play with, but when it's time to leave, the young one doesn't want to give up the doll. It seems the girl's mother believes Laura gave her daughter the doll, and Laura's mother, Ma, insists that she give the doll to her:

"Laura had to mind Ma. She stood at the window and saw Anna skipping down the knoll, swinging Charlotte by one arm.

"For shame, Laura," Ma said again. 'A great girl like you, sulking about a rag doll. Stop it, this minute. You don't want that doll, you hardly ever played with it. You must not be so selfish.'

**This is where I see the job of the parent: to help the child develop good habits and the will to live by principles.**

Laura quietly climbed the ladder and sat down on her box by the window. She did not cry, but she felt crying inside her because Charlotte was gone. Pa was not there, and Charlotte's box was empty. The wind went howling by the eaves. Everything was empty and cold.

"I'm sorry, Laura," Ma said that night. "I wouldn't have given your doll away if I'd known you care so much. But we must not think only of ourselves. Think how happy you've made Anna."

ple seemed to think that a single recipe was the most important legacy they had to leave behind.

Such a thought made me stop and ask myself what kind of legacy I'll leave behind one day when I am dead and buried. Do I want my legacy to be as simple and small as a recipe on a gravestone or do I want it to be much bigger—a legacy that touches people personally, makes them better individuals, and even encourages some to go on and impact the world at large?

I think most of us would automatically choose the latter. Who doesn't want his life to count and make a difference? "Forget that recipe on the gravestone, we're setting our sights on something higher and more worthy!" we all say to ourselves.

But then I read further in the article and my perspective began to change; for in some cases, there was more behind these recipes than meets the eye viewing the gravestone.

Take Kay Andrews, for example, whose gravestone recipe for fudge was another one that Grant made for her TikTok account. Kay's family described her as "the most joyful, loving person" who was always baking treats to give to others. Such food gifts, Kay's granddaughter noted, were "really how she showed her love."

When I first read about Grant's graveyard cooking ventures, I must admit that I thought it was a little sad. Making the recipe wasn't sad—that was a very touching and honoring thing for Grant to do. What was sad was the fact that some peo-

ple seemed to think that a single recipe was the most important legacy they had to leave behind. She made others feel special and wanted through simple actions and simple gifts. We only have her fudge recipe to look at on this side of eternity, but who knows what we'll find on the other side? The fact is, those simple actions that she faithfully did may have made an enormous impact for good.

Nineteenth-century writer Elizabeth Rundle Childers captured how small, faithful actions can make a huge impact for good in her poem "The Child on the Judgment Seat."

*Go back to thy garden plot, sweetheart!  
Go back till the evening falls;  
And bind thy lilies, and train thy vines,  
Till for thee the Master calls.*

*Go make thy garden fair as thou canst—  
Thou workest never alone;*



Legacy is more than the words on a gravestone—it is the impact created by a life that touches others with love and kind actions.

away their children's toys to teach them to be unselfish; Ma was able to ask that of Laura because she sacrificed many material things herself.

Which brings me to a most important point: In order to teach our children to live by principles, we must strive to live by principles as well and be honest with ourselves—and our children if need be—when we fall short. Ma took a risk, she made a mistake, she admitted it, and she did the work to rectify it. What more could you ask of a parent?

Two things give me strength to push through difficult moments. First, knowing that if I can stay strong when it's hard for me, I'll be much better qualified to help my children do the same. And second, all children have an innate moral conscience; they want to be good and do what is right, and they're counting on me to show and teach them how. If I, in a weak moment, let them follow through with some escapade, it's going to take a lot more work to correct the behavior next time.

Charlotte Mason points out that it's important to keep a balanced view of a child and encourage their good innate desires. For example, children want to love and be loved, learn, serve others, and give. Focusing on these, she writes, "will help his parents to restore the balance of his qualities and deliver the child from becoming the slave of his own selfishness." A parent having faith in the child's better nature is more powerful than consequences, and "the selfish child need not become, and is not intended to become, a selfish man or woman."

There are, of course, many important habits and principles to teach children. I would love to hear from parents of older children: What principles and habits did you teach your children that helped them in life?



*Do you have a family or relationship question for our advice columnist, Dear June? Send it to DearJune@EpochTimes.com or Attn: Dear June, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY, 10001*

*June Kellum is a married mother of three and longtime Epoch Times journalist covering family, relationships, and health topics.*

*Perchance he whose plot is next to thine  
Will see it, and mend his own.*

*And the next may copy his, sweetheart,  
Till all grows fair and sweet;  
And, when the Master comes at eve,  
Happy faces his coming will greet.*

Many of us look at our world today sighing in discouragement and wondering what on earth we, the simple, average Americans, can do to change the seemingly unstoppable train wreck that our country is headed for. We're too ordinary to make a big difference, we murmur to ourselves.

What we forget is that it's the simple, faithful, heartfelt acts of love and kindness that truly make a difference in this world. When we work and do our best in the areas in which we have been planted—our homes, our workplaces, our neighborhoods—being faithful in even the daily, mundane tasks we've been given, but taking time to be the listening ear, the helping hand, the caring friend, and the kind neighbor, then our legacy will be nothing to sneeze at once we're dead and buried. Instead, it will grow and spread, from one little garden plot to another, fed by the love, care, and faithfulness we bring to our everyday tasks.

*Annie Holmquist is a cultural commentator hailing from America's heartland who loves classic books, architecture, music, and values. Her writings can be found at Annie's Attic on Substack.*





A member of the excavation team, at San Casciano dei Bagni in Siena province, Tuscany, rescues an ancient bronze statue from the mud.



Archaeologists at San Casciano dei Bagni recently unearthed Italy's largest deposit of bronze statues from between the second-century B.C. and the first century.



Conservators are now preserving the ancient artifacts before they go on display in a new museum in San Casciano.



Since 2019, an international team of experts have been excavating the hilltop site of San Casciano dei Bagni.

## FINE ARTS

## Ancient Etruscan-Roman Bath Treasures: 'A Discovery That Will Rewrite History'

LORRAINE FERRIER

For centuries in Italy, people seeking good health have traveled to the spa village of San Casciano dei Bagni, in Siena province, Tuscany, to bathe in its thermal waters. In ancient times, visitors to the hilltop village once venerated statues of gods and goddesses in the



The ancients once venerated the bronze statues of gods and goddesses in the sanctuary of San Casciano dei Bagni before entering its healing waters. The same healing waters have preserved the ancient artifacts that have just been recovered.

bath's sanctuary before entrusting their woes to the sulfurous waters.

Since 2019, an international team of experts have excavated the village's Etruscan-Roman bath sanctuary, and they have just unearthed more than 20 ancient bronze statues and other objects as well as 5,000 gold, silver, and bronze coins—making it the largest deposit of Etruscan and ancient Roman bronze statues ever found in Italy.

Most of the site's ancient artifacts date between the second-century B.C. and the first century, when the expansion of Rome brought war and political instability to Tuscany's Etruscan cities. Until this discovery, it has been mostly terracotta statues that have been found from that era, making the San Casciano dei Bagni bronze statues one of the most significant discoveries in the Mediterranean.

This is "a discovery that will rewrite history," Etruscologist Jacopo Tabolli, from the University for Foreigners of Siena, said in a statement.

Among the treasures, the archaeologists discovered bronze statues of Hygieia (god-

ness of health) and Apollo (god of healing) and also sculptures of human organs and other anatomical parts that people used to convey to their chosen deity what they wanted the waters to heal.

Centuries of mud and thermal waters have helped preserve the artifacts to an incredible extent so that even small details, such as text, are legible. For instance, Latin and Etruscan inscriptions on some statues name powerful Etruscan families.

The excavation team was surprised by the monumental nature of the site. It exceeded their expectations, excavation director Emanuele Mariotti said in a statement. Besides the art and numismatic treasures, he praised the early Imperial-era architecture of the sanctuary.

More visitors will inevitably travel to the spa village to see the works. When the experts have studied and stabilized the ancient artifacts, they will be displayed in a new museum in San Casciano.

For Italians, this ancient Tuscan discovery is a chance to learn more about their country's heritage and ancient traditions.



Five of the well-preserved ancient bronze statues are more than 3 feet tall.

## Celebrating Incremental Improvements

If you feel like you're never getting anywhere with your goals, try using a different metric

BARBARA DANZA

If you ever feel like you're struggling to meet your own expectations of yourself or reach your own goals, you may be too focused on the end result and not focused enough on the process. A simple way to feel much better about the direction you're heading is to celebrate incremental improvements.

**Reframe Your Progress**

For example, imagine your goal is to pay off \$10,000 in debt. You do the math and see that you can eliminate it in one year if you pay \$834 each month. With some cuts in your budgeted expenses, you find that to be pos-

sible, and you send off your first payment. The next month, however, you experience some car trouble that requires a \$500 repair. How discouraging! You couldn't even make it through two payments of your plan.

You could look at this in two ways. You might feel so defeated that you deem paying off debt impossible and simply give up, going back to making only the minimum payments and thus living with the debt burden for a much longer period of time.

On the other hand, you might be glad that the car repair didn't eat your entire budgeted debt payment and that you could still make progress toward your goal. You repair your car and still manage to send \$334 to service

your debt. This incremental improvement in month two is still one to be celebrated. You've made progress toward your goal and your trajectory is a positive one. Whether you make up the difference within the year or simply add a few weeks to your plan, you can still feel encouraged that you're working responsibly toward your goal.

Setting goals is easy; predicting the ups and downs of life along the way is hard. If we're too inflexible as we go about reaching our aims or establishing better habits, we may fail to recognize the positive trajectory we're heading in, even if progress is slower or more imperfect than we originally envisioned.

When you train yourself to recognize and

## The Hidden Message on Ben Franklin's Fugio Cent

The first coin in circulation in the newly formed United States was the copper Fugio cent. It was designed by Benjamin Franklin, and sometimes referred to as the 'Franklin cent.'

JOSHUA D. GLAWSON

Perhaps the United States wouldn't have become so politicized had we all followed a good piece of advice from Benjamin Franklin.

In Franklin's 1737 book, "Poor Richard's Almanac," he stated what would be his literal and figurative idea behind money: "A penny saved is two pence clear." Contrary to popular belief, Franklin, who was known for his invaluable maxims, never wrote the phrase "A penny saved is a penny earned."

The first coin in circulation in the newly formed United States was the copper Fugio cent. It was designed by Franklin and is sometimes referred to as the "Franklin cent." Technically, some of the features of the coin were used on earlier proposed colonial coins and currency, but they were never released and not worth a Continental.

The Fugio cent was created in response to small currency coin shortages during that period, as the Colonies were tired of relying on Great Britain's supply of coins, particularly small currency copper coins, the production of which was paused in 1775. It's estimated that two-thirds of all copper coins traded in Great Britain were counterfeit by the mid-1780s, and in 1887, Great Britain began using privately made Conder tokens made of copper for smaller currency.

On the back of the Franklin cent, introduced in 1787, there are 13 rings symbolizing the original 13 colonies. These linked rings create an unbroken chain, encircling "We Are One," along with "United States."

Beyond its broader figurative significance, Franklin regarded the number 13 as an important number in his own philosophy. Throughout the coin's design, Franklin imbued his ethical and moral positions along with literal and symbolic messaging. He provided an exact weight of 10 grams of copper, or 157.5 grains. Even the subtle addition of grooved edges is a homage to historical moral character and the relation to money as it equally deters clipping or counterfeiting.

And there's more. In 1752, Franklin openly supported the change to the Gregorian calendar being used throughout the Colonies. Prior to that, only various colonies observed the same calendar year. The Gregorian calendar fits 13 weeks in by a multiple of four, equaling a total of 52 weeks. Each week is dedicated to one of his key virtues for personal development, four times per year.

In his philosophy of personal progress, he believed people should dedicate a week to practicing each of these respective virtues. After 13 weeks, when each virtue has been practiced, the cycle begins anew, and this happens four times a year. Franklin believed if each person focused on these virtues for an entire week, four times per year, they would surely progress.

This reflects Franklin's belief that virtue didn't come naturally to humans but was achieved over time through discipline. This was one reason Franklin saw time as precious, and he believed a country's liberty is made by each individual working on himself. As a Stoic, he understood life's delicate and finite number of years, all the way down to the importance of respecting others' time, as well as one's own. Contrary to popular myth, Franklin didn't invent

**The first coin in circulation in the newly formed United States was the copper Fugio cent.**

daylight saving time, but he certainly believed in the importance of a strict schedule making the best use of daylight and personal progress throughout one's life.

This, too, is reflected in the Fugio cent. On the front of the coin is a sun smiling and shining down onto a sundial, and within the sundial are hours of the day. The word Fugio imprinted on the left is a Latin word meaning "I fly," or "I flee," but it has more of a philosophical and historical recognition of "time flying by," a theme reflected in three words on the Fugio cent.

**Franklin's Advice**

On the bottom front of the Fugio coin was his advice. Inscribed on the coin: "Mind Your Business." By this, he meant the literal taking care of one's own affairs. Some historians have taken the meaning of this statement in conjunction with Fugio, as a nod to the older "tempus fugit" and "carpe diem," to be translated as, "Time flies, so do your work," or, "Time flies, so use it wisely!"

He meant "mind your business" socially as much as he meant it literally, and I believe this is supported by the entirety of his work. Franklin was an inventor, innovator, motivational writer, philosopher, politician, and founding member of the United States. It wasn't so much that he



The Fugio cent, which depicts the images of 13 interlocking rings on one side and a sun and sundial on the other, was designed by Benjamin Franklin as the first official coin in circulation in the United States.

was a proponent of laissez faire, per se. However, being the liberty-loving, pragmatic Stoic that he was, he did believe that each person should push themselves to their personal best within their industry and personal lives in order for the majority of people to live better lives together.

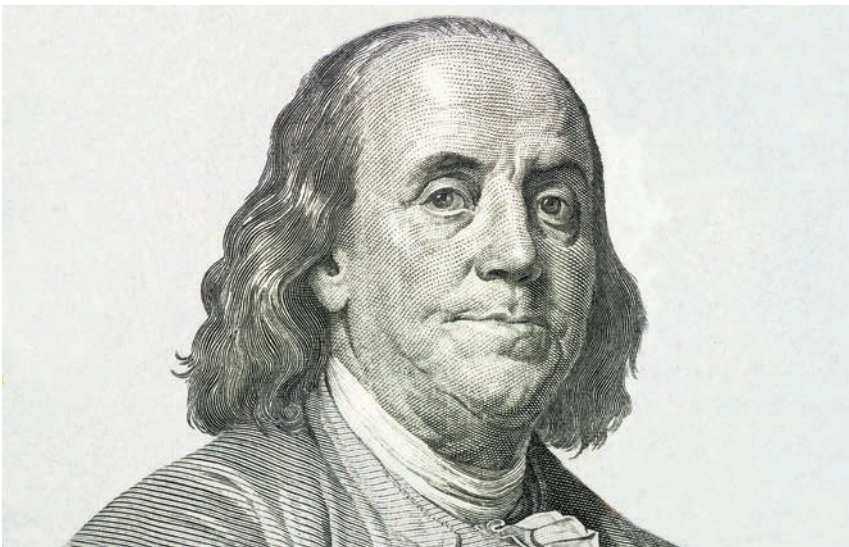
Today, the United States faces coin shortages, plummeting values in currency, deteriorating ethical positions, debased currency risks, Gresham's Law and the introduction of cryptocurrency as a cheaper form of currency, the Federal Reserve's fractional reserve banking, government monetary and fiscal controls with fiat currency and without shared value commodities, extended welfare programs, ongoing redistribution schemes, never-ending wars, and many other issues.

Holding Franklin's ethical virtues in relation to money is what helps prevent the decay in value of that currency. This is why, throughout history, intelligent and ethical people and countries have reverted back to these similar ethical positions when currencies begin to collapse. Money and morality are intertwined in such a way that money without morality can no longer remain money, and morality that lacks the appreciation of money can't remain moral.

In the end, Franklin's advice in economics, currency, and life is to be taken literally and figuratively: Mind your business.

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In his design of the Fugio cent, Benjamin Franklin included early American ideals that he himself held as an influential American statesman, diplomat, scientist, inventor, writer, publisher, and political scientist.

### Benjamin Franklin's List of 13 Virtues

The 13 interlocking rings on the coin's design symbolize the colonies and Franklin's virtues. He believed every person should be responsible for building his or her own character. Within his desire for personal development, he proposed 13 virtues:

- 1. Temperance.** Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
- 2. Silence.** Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself;

avoid trifling conversation.  
**3. Order.** Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

**4. Resolution.** Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

**5. Frugality.** Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.

**6. Industry.** Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

**7. Sincerity.** Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

**8. Justice.** Wrong none by doing

injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

**9. Moderation.** Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

**10. Cleanliness.** Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

**11. Tranquility.** Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

**12. Chastity.** Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

**13. Humility.** Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

celebrate incremental improvements, you build into your life pride in your progress and the internal encouragement to keep going. Further, you allow yourself to enjoy the process rather than leaving the fleeting moment of final accomplishment to be your only point of celebration.

**Celebrate Each Step**

There are many ways to celebrate incremental improvements. You might maintain a journal consistently that allows you to look back in time and see how far you've come. You may devise charts and graphs to plot your overall progress toward a certain goal. You may institute a habit tracker in

which you mark each instance of practicing a certain habit so that you can visually see improvement over time.

**Setting goals is easy; predicting the ups and downs of life along the way is hard.**

Celebrating incremental improvements is something worth teaching your children. The ability to continually move forward in life and dispose of any tendencies toward

perfectionism will serve them well. Rather than focusing on not achieving the goal of scoring an "A" on a test, you might recognize how much of an improvement they made over the last grade. Rather than calling out the dishes that have been left on the counter, recognize the progress that they've been stacked neatly and cleared from the kitchen table.

Life is messy and imperfect and will continue to pose challenges in the face of your aims. Despite those challenges, remember to celebrate incremental improvements and forge ahead knowing you have what it takes to reach your goals—and to even enjoy the process of doing so.



You can keep track of incremental improvements in various ways, including journaling.



# How to Connect Teens With Good Books

JEFF MINICK

Lately, I've been reading from M.F.K. Fisher's "The Art of Eating." I say "from" because this thick volume contains five books that Fisher wrote on cooking and dining. And her prose is as exquisite as the dishes she recommends.

While reading this book, the thought suddenly hit me: Why aren't our students reading this sort of literature? Our students should be reading books that match their interests and expose them to high-quality writing and ideas. And while we're at it, why not give today's teenagers some old books where the shrill cries of today's political correctness aren't even a whisper?

Suppose your 16-year-old son isn't a fan of Shakespeare or Jane Austen—no surprises there—but he enjoys military history. Hand him a copy of Anton Myrer's "Once An Eagle," which covers several of the conflicts between World War I and Vietnam. He'll not only acquire all sorts of information about the American military, but the history he's studied will come alive in this well-written novel, as well.

Your 15-year-old daughter is an amateur chef, always wanting to help out with the cooking and trying new recipes. Have her shake hands with "The Art of Eating," and you'll not only enhance her culinary skills, but you'll also introduce her to some fine writing as well.

Does your 13-year-old enjoy drawing and painting? Hie the kid off to the public library, head for the 700s in the Dewey decimal system, and let her check out some books like Sister Wendy Beckett's "The Story of Painting" or one of those oversized volumes containing the works of Rembrandt or Norman Rockwell. These will spark her artistic imagination while teaching her some history and culture along the way.

Introduce your teenage granddaughter to Betty Smith's coming-of-age novel "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn." If she's in need of laughter, as most of us are, give her a copy of Dodie Smith's "I Capture the Castle." Teenage boys looking for adventure in paper and print might enjoy John Buchan's "The



**Our students should be reading books that match their interests and expose them to high quality writing and ideas.**

Thirty-Nine Steps"—the godfather of the modern spy novel—or another story of cat-and-mouse pursuit, Geoffrey Household's "Rogue Male."

Many parents these days are leery about turning their teens loose in a public library, fearful the adolescent will pick something trashy to read—and there's plenty of trash to choose from. Parents look at the reading lists for their child's public school literature classes and discover they've never heard of half or more of the titles and authors, which is another sign that the good stuff from the past has gone the way of the Ford Model T and ladies' parasols.

So, what are concerned parents and grandparents to do? They want to play matchmaker, acquainting Sally and Jim with good books, stories that will make the kids lifelong literature lovers. But where and how do they begin?

Finding these books can seem a daunting task, but never fear. The good books are out there, and lots of writers and websites are still promoting them. Here are some tips that should make that search even easier.

First, a caveat: Avoid online sites in which the majority of "classics" and "best books for teens" are less than 30 years old. You'll find some gold there but far more dross.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are those sites that truly promote the classics of Western civilization. Some of these sites provide great resources, especially for homeschoolers, like "The Susan Wise Bauer Classics List." Many of the books listed are, as advertised, true treasures from our past. However, "The Iliad" or "The Broth-

ers Karamazov" are unlikely to entice most teens—especially the younger crew—into snuggling up on the sofa with a book, a cup of hot chocolate, and a comforter.

The best bet is to find a list of titles, some old and some new, that convey strong values while attracting the attention of adolescents. This list at Goodreads, for example, titled "Best (Classic) Books for Teens," includes such works as "Romeo and Juliet," "To Kill a Mockingbird," "Animal Farm," and "The Old Man and the Sea."

In addition, hard-copy guides can be a great resource for parents looking for the best in books for their teens. I'd highly recommend "Honey for a Teen's Heart" by Gladys Hunt and Barbara Hampton. Like Hunt's earlier book for younger readers, "Honey for a Child's Heart," this splendid guide for parents and teens contains hundreds of recommendations plus inspirational passages on the value of reading and advice from the selection of good books.

"Our hope—Barbara's and mine—is that reading this book and using its bibliography will spur your family on to even greater treasures of literature," writes Gladys Hunt in "Honey for a Teen's Heart."

And that, dear readers, is the goal.

*This article was originally published on Intellectual Takeout.*

*Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Virginia. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust on Their Wings," and two works of nonfiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man."*

Good literature instills a love of reading and encourages high-quality thinking.

# Homeschooling Through the Holidays

Liven up your homeschool this season with these festive holiday ideas

BARBARA DANZA

Holiday time is the perfect time to breathe new life into your homeschool. Just at the point in the year when things may begin to feel monotonous and motivation may start to dwindle, it's time to incorporate crafting and baking and making merry!

Here are seven simple ideas to add a bit of magic to your homeschool through the holiday season.

**Gratitude Practice**

The lead-up to Thanksgiving is the perfect time to encourage a focus on gratitude. Whether you create an elaborate project to display all the things your family members are thankful for, or you simply make a habit of naming what you're grateful for before dinner or bed—basking in the appreciation of your family's many blessings is a truly lovely way to kick off the holiday season.

**Homemade Treats**

The holidays beckon us into the kitchen to conjure up the traditional treats we love to share with family and friends. Cooking lends itself perfectly to homeschooling—incorporating lessons in self-sufficiency, math, chemistry, art, and more. Make your cooking and baking this time of year part of the lesson plan.

**Writing Cards**

Replace some of the regular language arts lessons with the act of writing Christmas cards. Whether you've got a stack of envelopes that need to be addressed or you want to encourage your children to put time and thought into writing heartfelt holiday greetings to their loved ones, there are plenty of formative lessons to be learned in these meaningful writing exercises.

**Decorating**

Decorating your home for the holidays calls for an abundance of creativity. Enlist the whole family in the activity and encourage the creation of new, handmade decorative touches. Art projects abound when it comes to holiday decor.

**Homemade Gifts**

Similarly, incorporate artistic endeavor with character development as you inspire your children to make gifts to give to loved ones. A plethora of skills might be employed—from painting to bak-

**Give yourself permission to lighten the workload this time of year and delve into the holiday traditions that your family treasures.**



ing to woodworking to photography to sewing to whatever your individual children are inclined to do.

**Pajama Day**

There are very few things that schools typically do that are worth replicating in your homeschool, but pajama day is one of them. Encourage everyone to get cozy in their favorite Christmas pajamas, make hot chocolate with candy cane stirrers, put on a Christmas movie classic, and enjoy a celebratory "school" day that can become an annual tradition.

**Christmas Read-Alouds**

Of course, no holiday season is complete without enjoying as a family the traditional stories that make their way off the shelf every year. Display them prominently, read aloud each day, and enjoy seasonal audio-books as well.

Give yourself permission to lighten the workload this time of year and delve into the holiday traditions that your family treasures. The learning will happen, the joy will be plenty, your family connections will deepen, and your Christmas will be merry.

As you mull over gift ideas for loved ones, encourage your children to use their creativity and skills—whether it be sewing, woodworking, or baking.



# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES



## Thanksgiving

By William Stanley Braithwaite

My heart gives thanks for many things;  
For strength to labor day by day,  
For sleep that comes when darkness wings  
With evening up the eastern way.  
I give deep thanks that I'm at peace  
With kith and kin and neighbors, too —  
Dear Lord, for all last year's increase,  
That helped me strive and hope and do.

My heart gives thanks for many things;  
I know not how to name them all.  
My soul is free from frets and stings,  
My mind from creed and doctrine's thrall.  
For sun and stars, for flowers and streams,  
For work and hope and rest and play —  
For empty moments given to dreams,  
For these my heart gives thanks today.

MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK



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**A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all the other virtues.**  
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (106 B.C.–43 B.C.), ROMAN STATESMAN AND SCHOLAR

# This Week in History

## GREAT SCIENTIST HAS A VISION



A copy of a painting of Blaise Pascal, 1691, by François II Quesnel, which was made for Gérard Edelinck.

French mathematician and physicist Blaise Pascal was a child prodigy and educated by his father. He invented the first calculator and developed the law of hydraulics and theory of probability, among other accomplishments.

On the night of Nov. 23, 1654, he reported having a supernatural experience. Upon envisioning something otherworldly, he wrote: "Fire, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and the scholars." He quoted the Bible's Psalm 119:16: "I will not forget thy word, Amen." This note was found after his death sewn into his clothing.



An early Pascaline on display at the Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris RAMA/CC BY-SA 2.0 FR

By Aidan Danza

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BOGDAN FLORESCU/THE EPOCH TIMES

# GROWING CRANBERRIES

In many households, cranberry sauce is a staple of the Thanksgiving table. But how do cranberries grow in the first place? Cranberry cultivation is an interesting process and quite different from many other agricultural practices.



Cranberries grow on low-growing woody vines, which grow in wetlands called bogs. They are used in their wild state by Native Americans, who eat them straight off the vine, use them as medicine, and to make foods such as grits and pemmican, a concoction of dried meat, berries, and animal fat. There are also European varieties of cranberries that grow in southern England and the Netherlands. However, cranberry cultivation only began in 1816. The industry has been sustained ever since; it's estimated that there are

40,000 acres of land cultivated for cranberries in America. Cranberry vines are unlike other crops like wheat and corn, which must be reseeded every year. They are perennial plants that have an unknown (but very long) lifespan. Some cranberry vines are estimated to be 150 years old.

The bogs are flooded from December to March to protect the vines from winter conditions. Every few years in the winter, a layer of sand is applied to the bog, which stimulates growth and promotes drainage. As spring arrives, the

bog is drained, and the dormant cranberry vines begin to turn green and resume growth. They produce buds in May, flowers in June, and berries in July. These berries ripen from September through November and are harvested through wet or dry harvest.

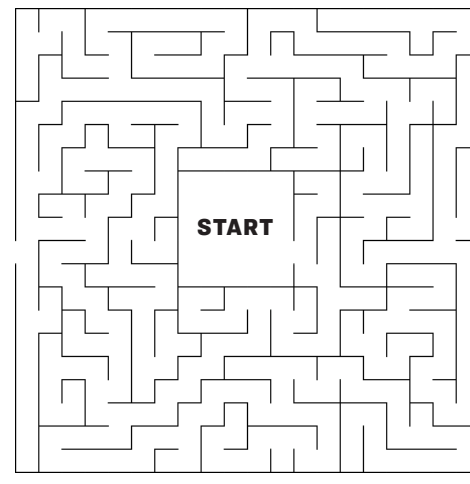
Ninety-five percent of America's cranberries are wet harvested. This is accomplished by flooding the bog and agitating the water with water reels—a large eggbeater-like machine. The berries are dislodged from their vines and float to the surface. They are then corralled

by floating "booms," which are extremely large lengths of material that herd the berries toward conveyor belts. These berries will be dried or processed into cranberry sauce or juice.

The other 5 percent of cranberries are dry harvested. The bog isn't flooded in this process; instead, the berries are harvested with a walk-behind machine. These berries are sold as fresh cranberries in stores and markets, and they are used for baking or straight eating.



## AMAZING ESCAPES!



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, - AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1+ (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1

2	8		
36			
2	2		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1  
2 x (2 + 2 x 8)

Medium puzzle 1

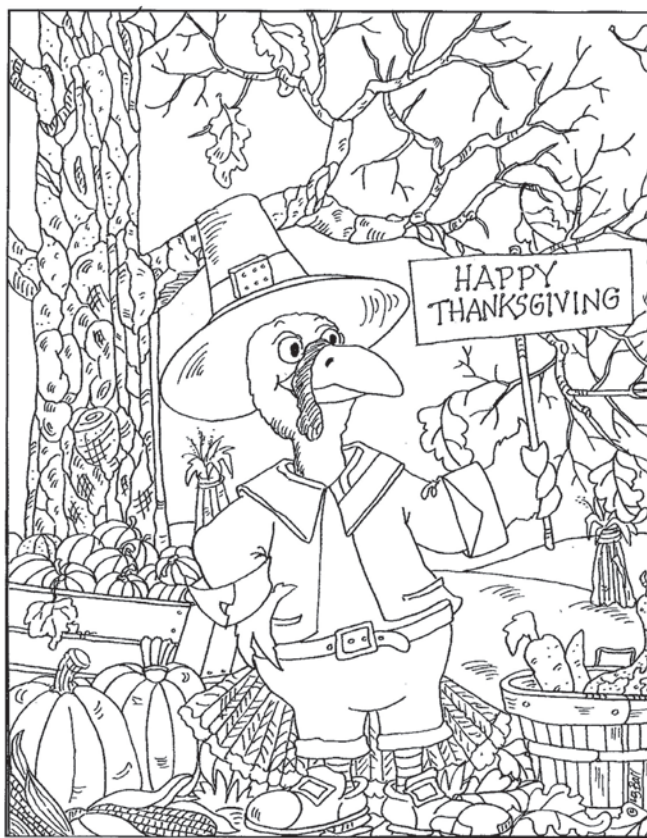
2	11		
31			
1	3		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Medium 1  
1 x (2 - 8 x 11)

Hard puzzle 1

9	30		
59			
6	25		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1  
92 - 08 + 9 x 6



HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball  
www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

WORD SEARCH: Thanksgiving!

P	E	C	A	N	P	I	E	K	D	I	N	N	E	R
A	C	F	M	I	Y	O	G	A	M	E	R	I	C	H
L	U	A	I	N	N	O	G	I	H	O	M	E	S	H
U	H	T	C	S	C	P	R	R	F	F	M	W	G	
T	I	I	U	B	H	G	A	B	A	P	P	L	E	S
H	N	H	M	L	R	T	C	A	V	K	E	E	Q	
A	D	O	L	I	N	A	E	O	C	K	Y	A	T	
N	I	L	P	Y	E	S	F	R	H	E	V	C	A	
K	A	I	O	V	E	N	A	G	F	E	O	N		
F	N	D	R	U	M	B	L	R	C	H	E	S	T	
U	S	A	H	T	Y	A	M	R	V	D	O	T	N	O
L	C	S	A	L	A	D	E	E	F	E	A	S	T	
T	H	U	R	S	D	A	Y	A	S	Q	U	A	S	H
F	A	M	I	L	Y	M	J	D	T	U	R	K	E	Y
H	X	F	O	O	T	B	A	L	L	B	O	N	E	X

America	Grateful	ENVELOPE
Apples	Gravy	CRACKER
Autumn	Ham	CRACKER
Bake	Harvest	CRACKER
Buns	Holiday	CRACKER
Carve	Home	CRACKER
Cook	Indians	CRACKER
Cornbread	Leaves	CRACKER
Dinner	Oven	CRACKER
Fall	Pecan pie	CRACKER
Family	Pilgrim	CRACKER
Feast	Salad	CRACKER
Fish	Squanto	CRACKER
Football	Squash	CRACKER
	Sweet corn	CRACKER
	Thankful	CRACKER
	Thursday	CRACKER
	Turkey	CRACKER
	Yam	CRACKER



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