



# LEAVE YOUR YOU-NIQUE MARK

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Church Magazines

Imagine opening up a bag of Skittles only to find a single color. Your “rainbow of fruit flavors” would be a pretty dull rainbow.

What if your spice cabinet had only Cajun seasoning? Let’s hope nobody in your family gets acid reflux with spicy foods!

Think about what you’d do if you opened up Spotify to discover that all your favorite songs have been reduced to a single note. Bye-bye melody; hello middle-C and a pretty boring dance session.

With things like that, it’s easy to see why having just one option doesn’t make much sense or isn’t very interesting. We know that variety makes a big difference there. But when we look at *ourselves*, sometimes we forget that differences are good—we start comparing ourselves with others or trying to be like everyone else just to fit in. We think we need to be the strawberry flavor in the Skittles

Visit the [Ildsyouth Instagram account](#) to find out what gifts make Hanna unique (pictured at the left).



## YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

bag because it's everyone's favorite. Or we don't want to be the salt in the spice rack because it's so ordinary (forgetting that it's oh-so-essential!). And what if we feel like G-sharp, who doesn't get nearly as much attention as middle-C? In every case, it's good to remember that it's the combination of *all the different* flavors or notes that makes the whole package rock.

Maybe that's one reason why Heavenly Father has given us a unique set of gifts and interests—because He knows it's important for all of us to be different. Our diversity and individuality can create some pretty great combinations in helping each other return back to Him. If you think about it, we all need something

different to strengthen us. So our differences mean that Heavenly Father—who wants us to help one another—can let each of us help Him in different ways to meet everyone's needs (see 1 Corinthians 12).

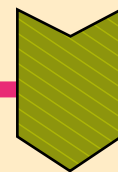
When we learn to embrace what makes us unique and then choose to use those gifts to grow closer to God, serve Him, and bless others, then together we can create a pretty cool package of Skittles, a super tasty spice cabinet, and the number-one song on the charts. Just imagine the difference our differences can make in the world!

### Your Personal Spin

When you think about your daily activities, rather

than trying to do things the way others are doing them, think about what *your* individual strengths can bring. That starts with knowing what your gifts and talents are. After all, there's no one right way to plan your upcoming club meeting. And if you're setting up a service activity for Mutual, then raking leaves isn't the only way to help Sister Scott, a widow down the street—especially if you're allergic to the leaves! She may appreciate your funny jokes, violin solos, or time spent painting together just as much as a leafless yard.

Give yourself permission to get creative in how you approach your day and week. Try writing down a list of your interests, gifts, and strengths—what makes you *you*. Then think about everything you need to do this week. Looking at your list of interests and strengths, see how those unique characteristics can help you complete your to-do list in a way that's uniquely you. Check out the chart on the next page to see how several people might approach the same task with their own personal spin.



## IDENTIFYING YOUR GIFTS

*Sometimes it's hard to identify what your strengths are. But a few ideas can help.*

Think about what things make you happy.

Ask others, especially your parents and bishop, what they see as your strengths.

Look for traits discussed in your patriarchal blessing or other priesthood blessings.

Notice what compliments you receive most from friends, teachers, or strangers.

Pray to Heavenly Father to help you identify your gifts.

CHEER OTHERS UP

SHARE THE GOSPEL

SCHOOL ROCKS YOUR WORLD.

You don't cringe when today's quiz requires a lot of memorization, because data is your thing.



Memorize scriptures or uplifting quotes that you can share with others who answer, "Meh," when you ask how they're doing.

Study Church history on LDS.org and in D&C seminary manuals, and use your knowledge to answer others' questions about LDS history or to clarify misconceptions.

YOU LOVE MAKING PEOPLE SMILE.

You don't have to "fake it till you make it," because you're genuinely happy—and you want others to feel the same.



This one's easy for you! Spend a few extra minutes with friends or family members who are feeling down. Your optimism or classic jokes are sure to bring a smile.

If the gospel makes you happy, let others know why you've always got a smile on your face! (See 1 Peter 3:15.)

YOUR NOTEBOOKS ARE COVERED WITH DRAWINGS.

Art is your thing. Sketching. Photo editing. Graphic design. Creativity moves you in a visual way.



Create a funny, inspiring, or happy message and send it their way.

Pair a scripture or conference quote with a cool image, and then share it on social media. You might even create a social media page specifically for posting gospel messages.

YOU CAN MAKE ANYTHING WORK AGAIN.

You know why things work the way they work. Somebody's equipment just broke? No problem—you've got this! Designing your own robot? Done!



A small handmade gift can go a long way. So can taking their minds off their troubles by teaching them your latest trick.

When you use your skills to help others and they thank you, after saying, "You're welcome," try adding, "Just doing my part as a follower of Jesus Christ." It might lead to cool gospel conversations.

TO YOU, "P.E." STANDS FOR "PERSONAL ENJOYMENT."

You're always the first one to gym class or on the court. Your dream job includes anything but sitting behind a desk.

Exercise is a great way to cure the blues. Invite them to play sports or take a walk.



Invite a friend to Church sports or outdoor Mutual activities. They might meet other LDS youth, feel the joy of the gospel, and want to know more.

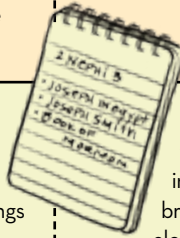
**SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY**

Did you hear about a friend who wants to clean up the city park? Help him gather some facts about the environment to strengthen his proposal to the city council.



**STUDY THE SCRIPTURES**

There are so many connections to build! Jot down similar topics or principles you discover, and make note of all the cool patterns there are to explore.



Since you love joy, take note of everything in the scriptures that brings people happiness, along with what doesn't. You'll build a great collection of the blessings of gospel living!

**HELP YOUR FAMILY**

Little sis is having a hard time with her geology homework? Now she has an instant tutor at home!



**PLAN A SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

Some people cringe at having to figure out how much food to buy or what activities would interest others—your quick surveys and analysis will turn the guesswork into genius plans.

Say hello to people you pass. Play peek-a-boo with children in front of you in line. Give a sincere compliment. Little things can have a big effect.

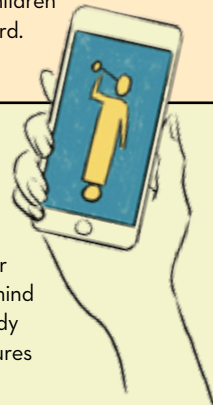
When someone is sad, give a hug. If people are bored during chore time, start singing your favorite song and see if you can get them to dance along while they dust.



With all the time spent planning school events, you want people to show up and have fun. Spread your excitement about the activities and build momentum so people want to come.

A lot of nonprofits or community programs need volunteer designers to create fliers or newsletters. Volunteering can help you build an art portfolio for future careers too.

Bring scripture stories to life by drawing them. You might even be able to create your own coloring books for younger siblings or the Primary children in your ward.



Beautify your house. Create photo collages of family memories or make motivational posters to hang in the bathroom to help family members start their day with a smile.

Posters are a must. Come to the rescue of the student body officers with your superhero art skills.

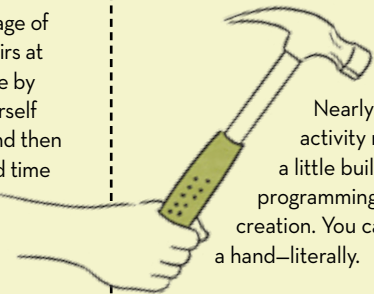


Keep your eyes open for needed repairs in city parks, neighborhood houses, or offices, and then offer your services.

Design a program or app to remind you to study the scriptures each day.

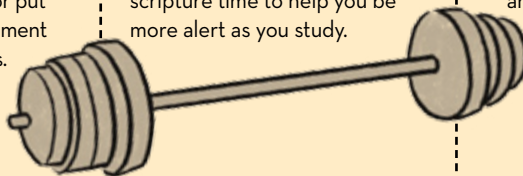
There's usually no shortage of to-do lists for small repairs at home. Surprise everyone by tackling a few items yourself throughout the week, and then enjoy the extra weekend time you'll all have together when you would've been doing the work.

Nearly every activity requires a little building, programming, or creation. You can lend a hand—literally.



Help people get active and become healthier. Organize a fun run for your community, or put together a softball tournament for neighborhood families.

Exercise energizes you, so consider exercising before scripture time to help you be more alert as you study.



Mom's got a lot of chores! Help her with ones that get you up and moving. Or help your brother meet his P.E. goals by training with him to make it more fun.

Do student officers need fliers delivered to local neighborhoods? Make door-to-door drop-offs part of your running routes this week.

**REMEMBER!** Heavenly Father has given us certain gifts, but He always wants us to keep developing more gifts and talents to increase our skills to become more like Him and to better help us help others! (See D&C 46:8.) **NE**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SUZY GERHART AND ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK