

“We Love You” Days

We Love You” days began when our family decided to help our then three-year-old who was struggling with temper tantrums. One particular day we filled our home with thoughtful expressions of our love for him. His response was so positive that we decided to

encourage “We Love You” days throughout the year to honor each family member. Some of our favorite activities for making our loved ones feel special include writing loving messages and hiding them in plastic eggs or holding treasure hunts with similar “treasure” notes. We have also made posters, service coupons, treats, and favorite meals. And to “officially” grant them royalty status, we’ve even made paper crowns and pillowcase capes. More important

than the special activities and decorations, however, is our time spent together as a family, telling our loved ones how much they mean to us.

Erica Farr, Nevada

Our Family Storybook

Coloring pictures and reading stories are two things children love. So why not combine them with a bit of family history for a creative, meaningful gift? My daughter-in-law, Katie, did just that while preserving some memories my son, John, had of his grandfather. She printed one or two simple sentences per page to form a booklet highlighting events of my father’s life. After telling the story, John asked his children to illustrate each page.

Since my grandchildren didn’t know their great-grandfather well, this was a special way for them to learn about him. With the finished copy in hand, they then paid him a visit. My dad was visibly touched to receive this uniquely personalized tribute.

You could help your children or grandchildren to create a similar book, featuring your own life experiences or singling out a specific incident. Remember to keep your storytelling simple. Then laminate the finished pages and bind them at a local copy center, or simply slip them into archival sheet protectors



and place them in a binder. They make great bedtime stories and are a wonderful way to say “I love you.”

Judy Grabam, Utah

Sunday Dinner Quiz

Who spoke in sacrament meeting today?” “What topics did they address?”

These and other questions form a simple game our family likes to play at the Sunday dinner table. Over the years our friendly quizzes have not only helped our children to pay closer attention to what’s said in sacrament meeting, but they have also sparked meaningful gospel discussions at home.

When our children were younger, we began by asking simple questions like “Who said the opening prayer?” or “What is the name of the deacon who passed the sacrament to our family?” Later we advanced to questions that required more understanding: “What scriptures did Sister Smith quote in her talk?” “How did they apply to the topic?” “Can you think of other scriptures that would also apply?”

Not every Sunday dinner is a doctrinal buffet. But playing this game has increased our family’s reverence at church. As a result, we are better prepared to learn from the talks and feel the influence of the Holy Ghost during sacrament meeting.

Brad Snell, California



Family Night Surprise

We have a blended family with biological, adopted, and foster children. Having family home evenings that hold everyone’s varied interests was a real chore for us—until I discovered the element of surprise. In a moment of desperation when no one would pay attention, I suddenly announced that we would all enjoy a “surprise activity” if they would listen to the lesson first. That got their immediate attention, and they were eager to cooperate. Though the first surprise

activity was admittedly impromptu, I have enjoyed planning several other successful activities, the majority of which focus on serving others.

We have made bread, assisted a neighbor in cleaning the yard, helped a family move, and made a quilt for a foster family. One time we played a spelling game together, an activity which benefited everyone but was

planned to help a particular child with homework.

Though I do most of the planning, you could easily let your children take turns helping (if they promise not to tell). It’s not so much the activity that matters as how you “serve it up.” Our children simply enjoy doing new things together while they help others.

Samantha Licurse, Arizona



Resource Guide to the Rescue

As a Young Women leader in my ward, I often felt the need to search out extra resources to update my lessons. One particular week in the summer of 2005, I was assisting my daughter, Katie, with a Fourth of July fund-raiser for her drill squad. Because I knew I would have extra time, I had brought my lesson manual with me and several copies of the *Ensign* and the *New Era*. As I browsed through the Resource Guide, one article caught my eye and

I thought, “This would be perfect for my lesson this week!” Sure enough, using the article suggested in the guide, I was able to prepare one of the most effective lessons I had ever given to these young women. The girls responded very well. I have found this to be true not only in my Young Women calling but in other callings as well. Rather than searching for outside materials, using the Resource Guide and other approved resources has led to my best efforts as a teacher in any Church organization. I would recommend the suggestions in the Resource Guide to anyone.

Kerry Reed, Utah