

HOLY SMOKE!



First you see it. Then you don't. Then you do.

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MATERIALS NEEDED

- › A tapered candle (not flat-top or recessed), preferably with a thick wick.
- › Matches or a lighter.
- › Your family's favorite cookies. You won't need them for the object lesson, but all proper lists should have at least three items.

Ever noticed how President Thomas S. Monson seems to remember the tiniest details from his life? When he shares a childhood story it's like it happened yesterday.

Well, in general conference President Monson mentioned one of his tricks of the trade. Before sharing some personal stories about prayer, he said, "My daily journal, kept over all these years, has helped provide some specifics which I most likely would not otherwise be able to recount."¹

Capturing memories preserves them forever. But if we rely on our minds alone? They vanish like smoke.

Object lesson time!



1

LIGHT THE CANDLE.

Discuss something awesome you and your family have done together lately. This could be anything from going to the temple to playing laser tag. Tell your family that the flame represents this activity. Talk through as many details as you can remember.

Disclaimer: This activity involves fire, which can potentially be hazardous. Find an adult to help you before doing this experiment. (Also, remember that open flames or lighted candles can't be used in Church buildings.)



2

BLOW OUT THE CANDLE.

Watch the thinning smoke. What does it make you think of? In this lesson, the vanishing smoke trail represents the details of your family event being lost over time. (Sniff. So sad.) But hey, no long faces. You're only getting started.



3

RE-LIGHT THE CANDLE

(the good stuff is right around the corner).

Tell your family that you're winding back the clock. The flame represents the same family memory as before. Only, this time you've got something special up your sleeve. Get your original flame source (match or lighter) up and running. Then snuff the candle by blowing straight down on the flame, and subsequently blow minds with what you do next.



4

HOLY SMOKE!

Hold the flame source directly in the smoke trail. If you blew down on the flame, the smoke trail should rise straight up. When the flame touches the smoke, a tiny spark travels down the trail and lights the candle all over again! Rest assured it's a crowd pleaser. This tiny bit of pyrotechnic prowess can be compared to capturing your family activity through journaling or other techniques. By recording events, you form a powerful link right back to the occasion and have access to crystal clear memories even decades later. The vanishing smoke of memory becomes a strong flame once more.

MEMORIES MATTER

Some final food for thought. Who doesn't love the inspiring account of Samuel the Lamanite as he preached to the wicked Nephites? The thing is, the fulfillment of one of his prophecies was not written down. It might've been lost forever. However, when the Savior visited the Americas, He commanded the people to record what they had missed (see 3 Nephi 23:6–13).

You fit right into this pattern. "Our service and personal ministry are not limited to the living on this earth," said Elder Hugo E. Martinez of the Seventy. "We can also keep a journal and write our family histories to turn the hearts of the living toward the living—as

well as the hearts of the living toward their ancestors."²

Capturing the blow-by-blow account of an especially epic snowball fight with your family may create a bond with great-great-great grandchildren you'll never meet. Cool! Consider, too, that describing in a journal how you found strength during a trial or gained testimony about a gospel truth might just be the answer to a prayer that won't be uttered for another 100 years.

So, preserve your precious memories. They'll burn brightly forever. **NE**

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Consider the Blessings," *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 86.
2. Hugo E. Martinez, "Our Personal Ministries," *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 103.