



# Gratitude



## Cultivating a Grateful Heart

What is at the top of your Gratitude List? How would your children answer the question, *Today, what is something that you are thankful for?*

This question was asked of a group of female inmates and they nervously laughed. Then they were assigned to keep a Gratitude Journal for one week. The format was easy; **Today I'm grateful for \_\_\_\_\_.** Thank you.

At the end of a week, they

reported that at first the assignment was difficult. One wrote "Today I'm grateful that the sun came up. Thank you."

Another had written that she was grateful for getting out of bed.

Still another wrote that she was grateful for "not being hassled by anyone."

As the week progressed, they began to find more to mention. Their attitude of gratitude grew. They began noticing things they'd missed before.

"I'm grateful for the mockingbird that woke me this

morning. Thank you."

"I'm grateful I was able to talk today with my daughter on the phone for five minutes. Thank you."

One powerful November ritual is to place a container in the middle of your table and every night let each family member think of one thing that happened that day that gave them a "grateful heart". Write it down, fold it, and put it in the container. On Thanksgiving Day, pull them out and take turns reading them aloud. You could even make and illustrate an annual scrapbook of grateful moments.



## Upcoming Events

**Community Week** is Nov. 2 - 5. We need volunteers each day to help us experience the bakery, restaurant, grocery store, post office, town square, hardware store, hospital, and movie house.

Note that we are off next Thursday and Friday, **November 11 and 12.**

Families are invited to ob-

serve our **Feast** on November 23 and 24 at 10:30. We'd love some help serving, also.



Buy new books from **Gardner's Bookstore** the first week in December and attend **Shop the Rock** on Saturday, December 4. Those

interested in being a vendor should contact Stacey ([staceyproctor@cox.net](mailto:staceyproctor@cox.net)).

December 17 is our **last day** of preschool for 2010. Everyone is invited to a playground workday on January 8.

Begin bringing used books NOW for our **January Used Book Sale.**

## Shadow Rock Preschool

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### Special points of interest:

- ☺ Check out [wonderopolis.org](http://wonderopolis.org)
- ☺ Go to [positiveparenting.com](http://positiveparenting.com)
- ☺ Check out our updated site at [shadowrockpreschool.org](http://shadowrockpreschool.org)
- ☺ For your reading list: **The Spirited Child** by M. S. Kurcinka.

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## Should He Go or Should He Stay from Womansday.com

You, the parent, are the best guide for whether your child is sick or not and should stay home or go to school. On our website you'll see our pre-school guidelines, plus here are some additional thoughts from the November 1 issue of Woman's Day magazine.

### Runny nose, coughing, congestion

**Keep him home if...** He has all of these symptoms, or just one but it's very bad. If he also has a fever and joint aches, it could be the flu, so staying home is a must. It's usually safe to send him back to class 3 days after the cold symptoms started or once he's been fever-free for 24 hours (especially if it's the flu).

### Sore throat

**Keep her home if...** It really hurts her to swallow, even if there's no fever. See the doctor, because this could be strep. If it is, she can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

### Earache

**Keep him home if...** The pain is so bad that he's waking up at night or crying. He may need to see the doc (antibiotics are occasionally prescribed.)

### Vomiting or diarrhea

**Keep her home if...** She has either

of these symptoms, because they're a sign that she's contagious. School is safe when symptoms subside.

### Rash

**Keep him home if...** You notice that it's unusual or severe. Many viruses and some bacteria can cause a rash. The doctor has to see it to decide if it's contagious and for how long.

### Eye infection

**Keep her home if...** The eye(s) looks pink or there's discharge. It could be pinkeye (conjunctivitis), which is very contagious. She can head back to school after she's been using prescription drops for at least 24 hours.



## What Can I Do to Help My Child Stay Healthy?

We all know that children commonly get colds 6 to 10 times a year. We also know that the spread of germs can best be minimized by frequent and thorough handwashing.

Teach your child how to wash his or her hands. Let them sing the ABC song TWO times through, scrubbing mightily. You'd be surprised how many children simply do not know HOW to wash. Help them, and help all of us.

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that will never be again. And what do we teach our children? We teach them that two and two make four and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them what they are?

We should say to each of them: Do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique. In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move.

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must work, we must all work, to make the world worthy of its children.

—Pablo Casals

## Piaget on Play

Jean Piaget theorized that a child's mental models, or cognitive structures, are based on the child's activities; engagement makes meaning. Free, unstructured play is healthy and, in fact, essential for helping children reach important social, emotional and cognitive developmental milestones. Piaget's theory



is based on the idea that the developing child builds cognitive structures known as mental maps, or schemas, for understanding and responding to physical experiences.

What is known as constructivism postulates that, by reflecting on our experiences, we develop our own under-

standing of the world. Each of us generates our own mental models to make sense of our experiences.

Learning, therefore, is the process of adjusting our mental models to accommodate new experiences. Constructivist teaching focuses on creating experiential and engaging activities for students. This kind of learning also involves an element of play.

## Christmas Angels

A Stepping Stone Foundation was birthed right here at Shadow Rock. This non-profit provides free preschool for children with limited possibilities. For 20 years this program, which requires the parents to themselves go to school and volunteer in the preschool classroom, has been a front-leader in efforts to provide all children with tools for school success.

This year classes are in both Alhambra and Fowler School Districts. You will find more information at [astepplingstone.org](http://astepplingstone.org).

Each holiday season, the Stepping Stone families fill out Angel tags for

their preschool children and siblings. These are shared throughout our community. The ones that go on a tree at Shadow Rock have complete directions on them for what is expected.

Each year our preschool is invited to participate and many families take a tag, shop with their children, wrap the gifts, and bring them to put under our tree.

This year the deadline for returning gifts is December 12. Watch for our

tree, **SIGN OUT A TAG**, and have fun making Christmas a happier time.

The parents are given the gifts in unmarked bags so that they can share them with their children as they wish. We love thinking of the smiles.

The Foundation also is part of the tax program for the Working Poor, so if you qualify, you get a direct dollar-for-dollar tax **credit** for up to \$400 for a couple. This is a painless way to support this worthwhile organization.



## Heard in the Halls

Christopher Akers was driving home with his mother and spotted a woman riding a horse and leading a foal down the path. He said, "Those horses need to be at the track!"

Dani Saunders deposited her glued artwork on the drying mat, stood and proudly proclaimed, "Bee-you-ti-ful!"

Vivian Sander said she couldn't come to Rainbow circle because she "had a wedgie".

After being dropped off in the yellow room by morning KDO, Kyle Shields walked with Mrs. Stangl to the workroom to pick up some materials. As they passed the purple room, Kyle noticed the dinosaur posters outside it. He told Mrs. Stangl, "Hey, there's dinosaurs over



there! I'm not going to the yellow room today, I'm going to the dinosaur room!"

When disciplined on the playground by another teacher, a Rainbow girl said, "You're not my mother and you're not my father and you're not my babysitter and you're not even my teacher and I don't have to do what you say!" How's that for logic?

## Bring Sanity to the Holidays

What do you remember about the best Thanksgiving, Christmas or Hanukkah? Reflect for a moment: the greatest gifts, the most hectic season, or the joy of time and love with friends and family? Remember when we



decorated tumbleweeds one year?

Remember when we baked cookies for our neighbors and they never ever guessed who did it?

Remember the years the kids **MADE** their gifts to give and

then were so much more involved in giving than receiving?

Remember how Dad would tell the real Christmas story?

Remember when we surprised Gramma early one Christmas morning?

Simplify the schedule, slow down to enjoy these years with your children. Time and love are the most important.

## Shadow Rock Preschool

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**Teaching is a process of becoming that continues throughout life, never completely achieved, never completely denied. This is the challenge and the fun of being a teacher—there is no ultimate end to the process.**

—Frances Mayforth

**(The same can be said for parenting.)**

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## The BIG Storm

Teddy Bears' Weather Report about what happened at their house during the BIG storm:

Keegan	Thunder
Andrew	Fog and iceballs
Tyler	My dog got scared of thunder.
Wren	It boomed on my house and broke it.
Thomas	Ice was falling on my head.
Magnus	There was dust at our house.
Travis	It rained different shaped balls. The fish got scared.
Hudson	It boomed on the house and bounced. (the hail)
Zoey	Ice hit Lisa's side. (the sitter)
Presly	Aunt took pictures of ice and I heard it.
Morgan	Rain balls hit Daddy's head.
Malia	Mommy left the door open and lightning came into our house.
Caleigh	We put frozen balls in the freezer.
Ian	The wind blew our banana tree down.



*(photo by Marci Larsen)*

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