



## 20 Ways to Teach Kids Gratitude

By: Amy McCreedy [www.today.com](http://www.today.com)

### December 2018

Main Article	1
Caterpillars/ Buttercup Butterflies	2
Pixie Butterflies	2
Elf Butterflies	2
Julia Butterflies	2
Events	3
Snow Paint	4

Of all the gifts your kids could get their hands on this season, there's probably only one that will ensure their happiness will outlast a pack of batteries. I'll give you a clue: It's nothing you can put a bow on. I'm talking about the gift of a grateful heart. It turns out, there's a lot to like about gratitude. Research from the Greater Good Science Center tells us that gratitude actually blocks toxic emotions even as it allows us to celebrate the present. What's more, grateful people are more stress-resistant and have a higher sense of self-worth. And wouldn't we all rather our kids appreciate what they unwrapped last year instead of constantly demanding the next new thing? Let's look at how to cultivate a thankful heart through the years. From preschooler to young adult, your kids can grow their gratitude instead of their wish lists.

**The Preschool Years:** When kids are young, they're still working on the concept of giving thanks — whether a verbal thank-you or a hand-drawn picture for a grandparent who read *Goodnight Moon* 10,000 times in a row. Practicing good manners in instances when a “thank you” is appropriate will nurture their budding sense of gratitude. While saying “thank you” may be an automatic response at a young age, as they get older they'll begin to attach true meaning to the words.

What to do:

1. Create a thank-you. When your young kids receive gifts, they should be expected to create and send a thank-you picture or short note within one day (or at the rate of one or two thank-you's per day).
2. Be polite to Mr. Bear. Role-play using good manners and saying “thank you” using stuffed animals and action figures.
3. Pick your top 3. At dinner or bedtime, take turns sharing the three best things about your day.
4. Commit it to memory. Find and memorize thank-you prayers, songs or poems.
5. Make a different kind of gift list. Write down the things (preferably handmade) your preschoolers would like to give friends and family as holiday gifts.

**The Elementary Years:** In the elementary years, help your kids reach out to others in meaningful ways. They're old enough to make a real difference, even if it's a small one. Not only will they feel good about what they can do, but helping others will foster a sense of appreciation for the people, experiences and things they value in their own lives.

Keep up the previous list, plus encourage your kids to:

1. Hand-write thank-you's. One sentence per grade is a good rule of thumb, and be sure to send them out promptly.
2. Make a gratitude jar. Fill it with short handwritten notes of gratitude (“I'm thankful we won the big game!” or, “I'm grateful Grandma came to visit.”). Pick a special time to pull out notes at random and read them aloud.
3. Say thank-you with cookies. Prepare and deliver a homemade “thank you” to your local fire or police department, or your pediatrician's or dentist's office.

Continued on page 3

Please check your child's parent folder every day. There is important information there! Also, make sure your child always has a change of clothes and diapers/pull-ups, if necessary. Thank You!

## Caterpillars/Buttercup Butterflies



We're exploring the holiday season with all of our senses. Smelling pine boughs, hearing jingle bells, touching "snow", and seeing our class tree. There is so much to do! Please do not forget our Holiday Program on December 14th with performances starting at 4:30PM.

**-Ms. Natalie, Ms. Stacey & Ms. Milena**

## Pixie Butterflies

Seasons Greetings! During the month of December we will welcome winter into our classroom. We will participate in activities that introduce snow, winter songs, and bells. We will also explore the different holidays that are celebrated during this month. The Pixies look forward to having a holly jolly month!

**-Ms. Maria & Ms. Vanessa**



## Elf Butterflies



We hope everyone had a wonderful time celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday and enjoying the break from school. We are so excited to spend time with our School Family during the next month as we discuss different family traditions, celebrations and diversity. We hope everyone can make it to the Holiday Program on December 14th! Your children have been working very hard preparing for the show!

**-Ms. Jessica & Ms. Beryl**

## Julia Butterflies

This month our class will talk about ginger bread and how to follow a recipe. We will also talk about different holidays we celebrate, review shapes, and continue strengthening our fine motor skills. Please be sure to your child practice writing his/her first name at home.

**-Ms. Paige & Ms. Vicky**





**DECEMBER**  
Calendar of Events

**Ms. Amy's 7th work anniversary– December 7th**  
**Holiday Store Open– December 10th to December 21st**  
**Santa Visits WPDN– December 14th**  
**Holiday Program– December 14th @ 4:30PM & 5:00PM**  
**Ms. Paige's Birthday– December 21st**  
**Ms. Heather's Birthday– December 27th**

## 20 Ways to Teach Kids Gratitude...

4. Make it stick. Leave sticky notes for each family member to thank them for something you appreciate.
5. Celebrate your year. Every birthday, make a list of things you are grateful for that year. A 5-year-old can think of five things, while a 10-year-old can manage at least 10.

**The Middle School Years:** As kids embark on their early teens, it's time to help them appreciate how good they have it. These years are also a good time to encourage generosity, and help kids learn when and how to go above and beyond as they reach out to others.

Keep up the previous lists, plus encourage your kids to:

1. Get it on video. Make a thank-you video for someone who gave you a gift or showed you a kindness. Saying thank you is always important, but it's OK to think beyond the note.
2. Make a plan. Research a service project, and make a plan to execute it. Invite others to join in.
3. Create a gratitude photo book. Using a smart phones (or a plain old camera, or magazines), gather photos of the things you're thankful for.
4. Help out without being asked. Make it a goal to do so once a day — and for any member of the family.
5. Give a gift card. Save up money to purchase a gift card (grocery store, gas card, etc.) for a person in need.

**The High School Years:** By this time, kid need to learn how to “own” their gratitude. With their growing need for independence, they'll enjoy showing their appreciation and making a difference on their own terms. Happiness expert and author Christine Carter, PhD, suggests teens focus on altruism — helping others and practicing kindness — rather than simply on gratitude. She states, “Helping others evokes feelings of gratitude, compassion, and confidence in people of any age.”

Keep up the previous list, plus encourage your kids to:

1. Thank a teacher or coach. Send a handwritten note to let him know how much his efforts make a difference.
2. Volunteer a Saturday. Think food pantry or animal shelter, and try to make it a regular commitment.
3. Go back to school. Donate your time to your old elementary or middle school and let your former teachers and coaches know how much they helped you.
4. Create a new family gratitude ritual. Make it something you can continue when you're on your own.
5. Pay it forward in the drive-thru lane. Use your own money to pay for someone else's meal.

Whether your kids are just out of diapers or almost into dorm rooms, there's plenty you can do to develop and encourage a grateful heart. And dig in! With a little work from everyone, your kids can be more tuned in to what really matters — like family, friends and a happy home this season.

## Snow Paint

It's so much fun painting realistic, icy-cold art that was cold to the touch like real snow!

### Here's what you'll need:

- ◆ Shave Cream
  - ◆ White School Glue
  - ◆ Peppermint Extract
  - ◆ Iridescent Glitter
1. Begin by popping the glue into the
  2. refrigerator. Its okay to leave it overnight and make the painting the next day. You can leave the glue out on the counter for 10 minutes just to get it flowing before you make your paint.
  3. Mix roughly equal parts of *chilled glue* and *shaving cream* in a bowl.
  4. Sprinkle in glitter and peppermint extract for a wintery scent (if desired).
  4. Paint your pictures then finish it off with more glitter.



WPDN will be closed on Monday, December 24, 2018 and Tuesday December 25, 2018 in observance of Christmas.

We will also be closed Monday, December 31st and Tuesday, January 1st in observance of New Years Day.

### Super Supper

1LB. Chicken Salad. \$5.00 each.  
Please pay by Wednesday, December 19th.  
Pick-up is Friday, December 21st.



741 S. Pennsylvania Avenue  
Winter Park, FL 32789  
Phone: 407.647.0505  
reception@wpdaynursery.org



**Mission:**  
The Winter Park Day Nursery provides a secure, nurturing and educational environment that is affordable and supports family diversity.

**Vision:**  
The Winter Park Day Nursery will build a stronger community by providing high-quality, affordable early childhood education that will prepare our children to succeed in school and life.