



14 Family-Friendly Gratitude Activities

Make a gratitude inventory. Keep a blank journal on hand in which family members can list things for which they are grateful (younger family members can draw pictures instead of writing words). You can simply document things as they come to mind or you can set a goal, such as listing 500 or 1,000 things before the end of the month.

Set up appreciation jars. Give each family member a jar or similar container to decorate. Once they are decorated, set these out on a bookshelf or mantle. Place note cards near the jars and encourage your family members to drop gratitude messages and encouraging words into the jars throughout the coming month.

Write gratitude letters to community helpers. As a family, discuss the important role of community helpers (EMTs, police officers, firefighters, etc.) and write thank-you cards to these individuals.

Play gratitude 20 questions. Have one family member (“the answerer”) think of something for which he or she is thankful. The remaining family members (“the questioners”) then ask questions to determine what the answerer has in mind. These questions must be stated in such a way that they can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”. The goal is for the questioners to determine the answer in only 20 questions.

Sit family members in an appreciation chair. Set a chair in the middle of the room and designate it as the “appreciation chair.” Gather around the chair and have one family member sit in it. Those gathered around can bestow praise, gratitude, and encouragement on the loved one seated in the appreciation chair. Have each family member take a turn sitting in it.

Make a gratitude collage. Use photos, drawings, and images from magazines to create a collage that illustrates the things for which you are grateful. This is a wonderful activity for family members of all ages, but especially for younger children who may not be able to write or articulate their gratitude very well.

Read books about gratitude. Get your hands on books that address the topic of gratitude and read these aloud together.

Make a gratitude paper chain. Give each family member strips of colorful paper on which to write or draw images of the things for which they are grateful. Use these to form a chain that you can use to decorate your home for the coming weeks.

Say grace before eating. Make a habit of saying a prayer of thanks to God as a family before eating meals.

Create a gratitude tree. Arrange some small tree branches in a planter or vase. Cut leaves out of colorful paper and give each member of the family a couple of leaves on which to write or draw images of the things for which they are grateful. Hang the completed leaves from the tree branches.

Write 365 thank-you notes. Purchase several packages of cards or some stationery and write one thank-you note on each day of the coming year. Family members can take turns writing the cards or you can sit down and write them together. Send thank-you notes to friends, neighbors, government officials, pastors, librarians, teachers, etc.

Study and memorize Bible verses about gratitude. Look up Bible verses about gratitude. Study and memorize these to hone your focus on giving thanks.

Make a gratitude tablecloth. Cover your dining table with banner paper or kraft paper and have each member of the family write or draw pictures of things for which they are grateful. You can leave the tablecloth on the table for a while so you can reflect on your many blessings and add to it as additional things come to mind. If you'd prefer, you can use fabric markers and puff paints to document your gratitude on a cloth tablecloth. This provides you with a more permanent memento.

Volunteer to serve those in need. Take the family to a soup kitchen, food bank, or similar charity and volunteer together.