HOLIDAYS ARE GREAT FOR SAYING THANKS

ED U. GATOR’S MOM AND DAD GET A BREAK

THE MOTHER OF FATHER’S DAY
Throughout the year, we get to celebrate, or show how grateful we are, for certain people and things on special days called holidays. On some holidays, kids get to stay home from school, and parents get the day off work. Those are great days for the whole family to hang out together, celebrating! On Arbor Day and Earth Day we show our appreciation for the earth and its natural resources. On President’s Day and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day we take time to remember, and show our gratitude for the great leaders of our country who struggled for our rights and freedoms. On Veteran’s Day we say thanks to the men and women who have fought and died protecting our nation all over the world. On Labor Day we give thanks, and a day of rest to those people who work hard at their jobs all year long. On Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and Grandparents Day we show how grateful we are for our loved ones. As you can see, the list goes on and on. That’s because we all have a lot to be thankful for! We can be thankful for our health, for our friends and families, for clothes on our bodies and for food in our stomachs. But you know what? We don’t have to wait for a holiday like the 4th of July or Thanksgiving to say we’re grateful. You can show how grateful you are everyday! Saying “thank you” when somebody does something for you shows gratitude. Playing nicely with your friends shows gratitude. Being polite and respectful to your parents and other adults shows gratitude. Bet you didn’t know it was that easy! So go out and spread a little gratitude today. All it takes is a handshake, a hug or a kind word!

**VOCABULARY:**
Arbor: a place shaded by trees or bushes.
Veteran: a person who has served in the army, the navy or the marines.
Labor: work.

**ACTIVITY:**
Lots of holidays are mentioned on this page. Can you think of something, or someone else who could use a “We’re grateful for you!” day? How about a family pet, or a special person in the community?
Hi, great friends! Ed here. Last week in school, Mr. Salam Ander talked to us about gratitude and appreciation. Those were two pretty big words, and at first we weren’t sure what he meant. But then he explained about how hard our parents work, and all the things they do to take care of us. He said it was important that we showed our parents in some way how thankful we are for their love and support. Well, I thought about that for the rest of the day. I thought about my clothes and my books, my games and all my toys, and how there was always food and snacks in the kitchen whenever I was hungry. It’s easy to take that stuff for granted, but those things didn’t just appear by magic! Then I thought, what could I possibly do to tell Mom and Dad thanks?

On the bus ride home I came up with a plan. What if El and I offered to do all of mom and dad’s chores for a week, and give them a kind of a “holiday” from house stuff? I was really excited about the idea, and when I got home El said she was willing to help. So at dinner that night, we sat down with Mom and Dad, and asked them to help us make a list of the things they do around the house each week. Boy, my hand almost fell off when I finished that list! I had no idea they did so much! The list included: laundry four times a week, dusting the furniture, cleaning the windows each week, vacuuming, mopping the kitchen and bathroom floors, preparing meals and picking up after El and me. It went on and on! But El and I had made our offer; so we couldn’t back out now.

Well, let me tell you, doing housework is a humongous job! But El and I did the best we could. We made a few messes along the way. El washed a pair of pants with bubblegum in the pocket, and I vacuumed up one of Dad’s socks! And I think Gramps got a little tired of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for every meal. By Friday I was having trouble staying awake in Mr. Ander’s class! But I was really glad we did it. It felt good to be able to show Mom and Dad our gratitude and appreciation. Mom got to relax and read a whole book! Dad got to work on his scrapbook, and he spent a few evenings in the garden. And guess what? Friday night Mom and Dad told us how grateful they were for our help, and how much they appreciated the rest and relaxation! I guess gratitude goes both ways!

Questions:

1) How did Mr. Ander explain the meaning of “appreciation” and “gratitude”?

2) What were some of the things Ed realized he was grateful for?

3) Why was Ed surprised about mom and dad’s chore list? Can you remember some of the things his Mom and Dad did every week?

4) How did El and Ed do with their appreciation plan?

5) How did Ed feel at the end of the week?

6) Why were Mom and Dad grateful to Ed and El, too?
A GRATEFUL GREETING CARD

Directions: On the blank card below, design your own “grateful greeting.” Think of what you might say to a friend or family member that would show your appreciation. In the space marked “front,” draw a picture or design. Cut out the card along the dotted lines and fold in half and then in half again (along the solid lines). Write your message inside and give the card to that person you appreciate.
IN THE NEWSPAPER

**Directions:** Did you ever wish you could go into a store yourself and buy something special for your brother, sister, mom, dad or friend, or anybody else you really care about? Pretend you’ve saved up enough money to buy that person a gift. Look through the newspaper and see if you can find something that you would buy that person if you could. Cut out the picture of the item, and underneath it, write that special person’s name. That was very thoughtful of you!

A FRIENDLY FLOWER

**Directions:** Sometimes people show gratitude by giving each other pretty flowers. Below there’s a drawing of a beautiful flower, with lots of petals. Think about all your friends, and write a different friend’s name in each petal. When you’re finished with the names, color the flower in with crayons or markers.
On Caroline's seventh birthday, Nana Sara bought her a wheelbarrow and a beautiful set of gardening tools. Caroline had always admired her grandmother's flowers, and Nana thought Caroline was old enough, and responsible enough, to care for her own garden. The two had worked together, planting seeds and pulling weeds, since Caroline was big enough to walk. Nana was fond of saying, "If you take good care of a garden, it will take care of you!" With her mom, and her shiny new wheelbarrow, Caroline walked down to Mr. Abel's nursery and garden center. Mr. Abel gave her some tips on which flowers to grow when, how far to space them apart, and which ones produced the most gorgeous shapes and colors. She walked home proudly with her wheelbarrow full of seeds, bulbs, soil and fertilizer. She couldn't wait to get started digging in the dirt!

Her mom helped her till a rectangular plot of land in the back yard. Caroline worked hard till dark, digging, planting and watering her new garden. She got thirsty gardening in the hot sun, and drank four whole glasses of her dad's homemade lemonade. At quitting time she stood up, wiped her dirty hand across her sweaty brow, and looked lovingly at her handiwork. Just then, Nana Sara pulled into the driveway, and gave Caroline a sign she had made on a post to stick in the garden. It said: CAROLINE'S GARDEN. She hammered it into the soft, wet soil with the end of her spade. Then the two walked inside, hand in hand.

The next morning was Saturday, and Caroline woke up before dawn. She just couldn't wait to get back to her garden! She pulled on her jeans, her old beat-up tennis shoes, and grabbed a baseball cap from her dresser. She picked a juicy apple from a bowl in the kitchen, on her way out the door. The sun was coming up just as her feet hit the ground. What a beautiful morning! She spent the whole day tending her garden. Everyday after school she spent an hour or two in the backyard. Most days there was little to do besides water the soil, but she loved to sit by her garden reading books or drawing pictures. She told her Nana she was "keeping her garden company."

"You'll see," said Nana Sara. "Your garden will be so grateful for all your dedication and hard work. Remember what I told you, if you take good care of a garden it will take care of you. You will have the most magnificent flowers in town!"

And as usual, Nana Sara was right. It wasn't long before Caroline's garden was filled with the most dazzling display of reds, pinks, blues and yellows. It was as if the garden was saying “thank you so much” in the only way it knew how. Neighbors caught a glimpse of the flowers when passing by, and wandered into the backyard to see it in all its splendid glory. Caroline continued to care for her garden, watering and feeding, pulling weeds and planting more seeds. She knew the garden required her loyal care all season long.

Caroline was most proud when she picked a bouquet and carried it to Mr. Abel's nursery. He was amazed at her green thumb. "You've done fine work, Caroline," he said, patting her on the back. The garden made Caroline happy till the ground was too cold to plant anymore. After the flowers had all died, Caroline knelt down on the ground and whispered, "just be patient. As soon as I can, I'll be back!" And the grateful garden went silently to sleep for the winter.
since before the turn of the twentieth century, people in this country have showed their gratitude for moms by celebrating Mother's Day. It's a day when moms get showered with beautiful flowers, delicious candy and treats, thoughtful cards, special attention and affection. But until very recently, dads haven’t had their own designated "appreciation" day. It took a woman named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd in Spokane, Washington to come up with the idea, and a former president, Richard Nixon, to declare it an official holiday.

Dodd was listening to a sermon on Mother's Day in 1909, when she decided it was time for a day to honor and show gratitude for fathers, too. She was particularly grateful for her own father, William Jackson Smart, who had raised her and five brothers and sisters after their mother died in 1898. Dodd was able to convince Spokane, Washington, to celebrate Father's Day a year later on June 19th, but it took the rest of the country 62 more years to catch on! Finally, in 1972, President Nixon made the day a nationally recognized celebration. Since then, dads, too, have been showered with affection, cards, treats and thousands of neckties.

**VOCABULARY:**

**Twentieth century:** one hundred years, beginning in 1900 and ending in 1999.

**Designate:** to point out or choose.

**Official:** something that is definite and absolute, often decided by a government.
1) As always, kids learn best by example. The more times they hear you and other adults say “thank you” and “you’re welcome,” the more they will assume these pleasantries are an integral, and everyday part of social communication.

2) Take every opportunity to show your child how much you appreciate him. Make a big deal about his artwork, completed homework, and good report cards. Acknowledge your child’s attempts at independence, especially in the areas of self-help skills, even if the attempts are not entirely successful. Give your child an occasional hug, for no reason at all!

3) Many of us choose the places we go, like banks, gas stations, restaurants, and grocery stores because we receive the level of service and quality that we expect from those locations. We show our gratitude to those people and places by becoming loyal customers. If possible, explain to your child what keeps you coming back to these high quality, service-oriented establishments.

4) Young kids have a natural tendency to be careless with their belongings. Teach them the importance of keeping their clothes, toys and other items in good shape, and to be grateful for what they have, because broken or ruined objects and articles of clothing, cannot, and should not always be replaced.

5) It’s often difficult to explain to a young child about “being grateful” for siblings and friends. But show how the qualities of loyalty and respect for others contribute to gratitude.

RESOURCES
Seuss, Dr. Horton Hatches the Egg. Random House, 1940.

FAMILY PLEDGE CARD
Our family has completed the Family Page together:
____________________________
Child’s name
Family members:
____________________________
____________________________
School: ___________________________________
Teacher/grade: ___________________________

For more information about Project: Solution, call 726-8918 or 1-800-351-1227, ext. 8033 or 8918.