



How to...



Talk to people you disagree with

Use these ideas to avoid arguments and have meaningful conversations.

Everyone occasionally has disagreements with friends or family members. For example, you and your friends might not agree about what game to play at recess, which restaurant makes the best pizza, or which baseball team is the best in the league. Sometimes you may also have different views than a friend or family member about more serious topics, like events happening in the US or around the world. While disagreements can be uncomfortable, there are some steps you can take to make conversations more civil and productive. Here's how.

See their perspective

Even if you don't share someone's point of view, you can still listen to what they have to say. Show that you're paying attention by listening attentively without interrupting them. Think about how their life experiences may be different from yours, which gives them a perspective that's different from yours too. Another way to show that you're listening is by asking questions or repeating what they said. You can start by saying, "OK. If I understand you, you are saying..."

Use respectful language

When someone has an opinion you don't agree with, it can be easy to dismiss it—especially if it's on a subject

you're passionate about. Some people shoot down others' opinions by using sarcasm or attacking the person's judgment. (If you've had this happen to you, you know it doesn't feel good!) Avoid using insulting adjectives, like "stupid," "dumb," or "ridiculous." Instead, focus on speaking calmly. Start with statements that begin with "I" instead of "You." For example, you might lead your opinion with "I feel" or "I see this another way."

Stick to the facts

WOW!
The longest debate marathon lasted 27 hours, 58 minutes, and was achieved by the College Historical Society at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, in 2023.

If you have a strong opinion, you can make a better case for it with facts instead of feelings. Start by asking if you can share your opinion. Then relax your shoulders and say what you would like to say in a calm voice. If you get interrupted, gently remind the person that you gave them a turn to speak and now you would like to speak. Then give the person a chance to respond.

Find common ground

You may find that you can't change the other person's mind, and they may not change yours. Still, look for points you do agree on. You may also gain a better understanding of each other's opinion. In the end, it's worth the effort because healthy communication builds strong relationships and communities.

Ways to feel calm



If you're feeling stressed out, here are some quick solutions to feeling calm and in control.

Get outside Exercise can help you forget the irritations of the day. Do what brings you joy, whether kicking a soccer ball, running, or doing yoga.

Keep a journal Writing down your feelings can help you vent your frustrations. You can also record your gratitude for what's going right, which can help give you perspective.

Pet an animal Research shows that simply petting a dog lowers the stress hormone cortisol and increases the feel-good hormone oxytocin.



How to...



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the stove.

TASTY TOPPING
Everything bagel seasoning is made of poppy seeds, sesame seeds, dried garlic, dried onion, and salt.

Make everything bagel pasta with cheese and broccoli

Ingredients

- 1 large broccoli crown, cut into florets
- 12 ounces cavatappi pasta
- 1 1/3 cups ricotta
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 tablespoons everything bagel seasoning, plus more for serving
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper

Instructions

- Place a large, heat-safe bowl on a countertop near the stove. With an adult's help, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the broccoli and cook 4 minutes.
- With the water still boiling and with an adult's help, use a slotted spoon to remove the broccoli from the pot and place in the heat-safe bowl.
- Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook according to the package directions. Once done, with an adult's assistance, drain and

- add the pasta to the bowl with the broccoli, reserving 3/4 cup pasta water.
- Quickly add the ricotta, Parmesan, bagel seasoning, and lemon zest to the pasta bowl.
- Add 1/2 cup of the reserved pasta water, and use a spatula to stir together the ingredients until saucy and creamy. If needed, add more pasta water, 1 tablespoon at a time. Taste then season with salt and pepper as desired.
- Serve immediately with more bagel seasoning for sprinkling. Makes 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK DO A SPRING CLEANUP

When winter comes to an end, many people do what's called spring cleaning, when they deep-clean their home. You can also do this in your neighborhood. Talk to the people who live near you to see if they are interested, then set a date for your community cleanup. On the day, start by walking around your neighborhood and picking up any trash you see. Sometimes there's more litter on sidewalks in the spring because it was covered with snow or simply not noticed since fewer people are outside in the winter. Next, clear any natural debris and rake leaves that have fallen from spring storms. Once you're done, walk through your neighborhood to admire your efforts.



Spruce up your neighborhood.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Research suggests that watching nature documentaries helps to reduce stress.

Make a nature documentary

Raise awareness of wild animals by creating your own film.

World Wildlife Day will take place on Monday, March 3. (Read about it in our story on page 3.) One way to celebrate the wild animals that live all around us—and to educate others about their importance—is to make a nature documentary. All you need to create this nonfiction film is a camera and a subject. Here's how you can get started.

Pick a theme

First, decide what you would like your nature documentary to be about. Do you want to film wildlife that lives outside your home, or would you rather ask an adult to go with you to a nearby park or nature preserve? (For ideas about what to film, see the sidebar at right.) Do some research and choose local wildlife that interests you. For example, think about the animals that live in your region and the species you are more likely to see during daylight hours.

Do your research

Once you decide what to film, do some deeper research on your subject. Take notes that can help you look for interesting facts to film. For example, what are some of the animal's feeding habits?

Research the physical differences you might spot between males and females of the same species, from size to color to behavior.

Film and edit

You don't need elaborate equipment to make a nature documentary. You can use a video camera or a phone with a camera. A tripod will help keep your camera steady but isn't necessary. When you're ready to film, stay a comfortable distance from wildlife so you don't startle or frighten away your subject. You can also film an introduction: Put your camera in selfie mode, introduce yourself, and let the audience know why you chose your subject. Finally, you can use a free app like iMovie or CapCut to edit your film and add titles.



Pick a film subject that lives nearby.

Host a screening

When you're happy with your film, invite family and friends to watch it. You can have a screening at home or check with your local library about the availability of a meeting room. After the screening, have a question and answer session so the audience can ask you about your documentary. Finally, thank everyone for coming!

Backyard wildlife



You can find the subject of your nature documentary in your neighborhood. Some examples:

Garden insects Look on or around plants for bees, caterpillars, and monarch butterflies. Try capturing their fast movements using your camera's slow-motion mode.

Small mammals Animals like cottontails or squirrels are often most active at dawn or dusk. Pick a spot to zoom in on their activity from a distance.

Birds Check shrubs and feeders for backyard birds, like robins, bluejays, and cardinals. You might also visit a local pond with an adult to find mallards.

How to...



Cook up green eggs and ham

Ingredients

- 2 ounces cooked ham
- 4 teaspoons butter or olive oil
- ¼ large avocado
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 2 eggs

TRY THEM, I SAY!

More than 200 million copies of *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss have been sold since its publication in 1960.

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 200° F and put an ovenproof plate or pan near the stove. Cut the ham into bite-size pieces (you should have about ½ cup). Heat 2 teaspoons of the butter or oil in a nonstick skillet over medium heat until butter is melted or oil is shimmering hot. Don't let it burn.
2. Add the ham and cook, stirring enough so it doesn't burn, until the pieces are brown and crisp in places, about 5 minutes.
3. While the ham cooks, prepare the avocado. Ask an adult to carefully cut it downward toward the center in 2 places without cutting through the pit. Twist the avocado open, scoop out about ¼ of the fruit in big chunks, and put them in a medium bowl. (Wrap the rest of the avocado tightly in plastic and save for another use.)
4. Remove the skillet from the heat, add the maple syrup, and stir until the ham pieces are shiny. Scrape the ham and glaze from the pan onto the plate and transfer to oven to keep warm. Rinse the skillet and wipe it dry.
5. Mash the avocado with a fork or a potato masher until most of the lumps are gone. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Crack the eggs one at a time and add them to the bowl. Use a fork or a whisk to beat them with the avocado until the mixture is smooth. (You'll see that the eggs will turn a light green!)
6. Place the skillet over medium heat and add the last 2 teaspoons of butter or oil. When it's hot, add the egg mixture. Use a spatula or spoon to cook and stir the eggs, scraping the sides and bottom of the pan.
7. Serve the eggs right away with the ham and whatever else you like on the side (such as toasted pita bread). Makes 1 to 2 servings.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the stove.



LIFE HACK

DESIGN YOUR OWN AMAZING SIGNATURE

Your signature identifies you, whether you are signing a card, a school form, or a yearbook. It provides an opportunity to show your style. How do you want yours to look? For inspiration, look up famous signatures. For example, Walt Disney had a loopy signature. Beyoncé's is defined by her elegant cursive and a squiggly underline. Pablo Picasso signed his paintings in thick, bold letters. Practice with a pen and paper. Choose the letters in your name that you'd like to stand out. For many, those are the initial letters of their first and last names. Experiment with the size and shape of your letters. Once you're happy with your signature, share it with a friend to make sure they can read it.

Sign with style.





How to...



Get a better night's sleep

Feeling rested and energized can help make you happier and healthier.

Most tweens and teens need about 9 to 11 hours of sleep to be their healthiest and do their best in school. However, studies consistently show most kids aren't getting enough sleep. That can affect everything from your ability to concentrate in class to your mood around your family and friends. Here are some ways you can get your sleep habits on track.

Set a regular bedtime

When you go to bed around the same time every night, your body gets used to the schedule and you fall asleep more easily. To figure out what your bedtime should be, think about when you have to wake up and work backward, counting the hours to pinpoint what time you need to be in bed. If you want to get 10 hours of sleep and have to wake up at 7 a.m., you would need to be asleep by 9 p.m.



Be sure to clock enough rest!

Relax before bed

Give yourself an hour to wind down before bedtime so your body and mind are ready for sleep. Split the hour into three 20-minute segments. Start with 20 minutes to prepare for the next day (you can pack your backpack and lay out your clothes). This helps you go to bed with a calm mindset and saves you time in the morning. Then

set aside 20 minutes for hygiene (shower and brush your teeth). Finally, for the last 20 minutes, do something relaxing that helps you fall asleep more easily (like reading a book or listening to calming music).

Avoid sleep stealers

Things you do during the day can also affect your sleep. Try to avoid drinks and food with caffeine (like soda and chocolate) in the afternoon and evening.

Exercise can help you feel tired, but working out within two hours of your bedtime can make it hard to wind down. Try not to text or play video games in the two hours before bedtime either—the light from the screen can make your body think it's daytime.

Stay consistent

It's tempting to sleep in on weekends, but oversleeping can mess up your sleep rhythms for the week. Wake at your usual time, or close to it, so you can stay well rested all week. It can take two weeks or longer for your new sleep routine to work. If you can't sleep after 20 minutes of lying in bed, you can get up and do something else, like sitting in a comfortable chair to read, until you feel tired enough to drift off to sleep.

3 benefits of sleep



Greater strength Sleep can help you feel better physically because it can give your muscles time to grow and recover after exercise. Studies show that getting enough sleep helps basketball players score more shots and football players sprint faster.

Better concentration Most mental activity is enhanced by sleep. That includes memory, problem-solving, handling emotions, and judgment.

More creativity If you're feeling stuck on how to solve a problem, you may be more likely to come up with a creative solution after a short nap, according to research.



How to...



Make hot chocolate cubes for chilly days

Ingredients

- 1 cup mini marshmallows
- 4 ounces (½ cup) heavy cream
- 1 (14-ounce) can condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 (24-ounce) bag bittersweet chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Arrange 2 silicone jumbo ice cube molds (ours were 2-inch molds) on a sheet pan. Put the marshmallows in a small bowl. Next, make a double boiler: Fill a saucepan with 1 inch of water. Place a large, heat-safe bowl on top of the saucepan, making sure the bottom of the bowl is at least 1 inch from the water.
2. Combine the heavy cream, condensed milk, and vanilla in the bowl and whisk until smooth. Add the chocolate chips. Keep the bowl fixed in its place and heat the water in the bottom pan to a simmer. With an adult's help and using an

- oven mitt to steady the bowl (it will get hot!), continually stir the chocolate mixture until smooth, scraping the sides as needed. Remove from the heat, then use a spoon to quickly fill 10 of the cube wells three quarters full. Tap the molds on the counter to level the chocolate, then press marshmallows into the top of each.
3. Refrigerate cubes until hardened, about 3 hours. Whenever you want a cup of cocoa, remove a cube from the mold, place it in a mug, and top with 6 to 8 ounces of hot milk. Stir until the chocolate is dissolved. Makes about 10 cubes.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

DIM THE LIGHTS TO KEEP BIRDS SAFE

Spring migration season for birds is right around the corner. Birds can fly for thousands of miles, and you can do your part to help them travel safely. Many migratory birds, like the indigo bunting, common yellowthroat, and Swainson's thrush, get confused by artificial light and glass, which causes them to collide with windows. One way you can help minimize that hazard at home is to talk to your family about dimming or turning off any unnecessary outdoor lighting. You can also set lighting on timers so any outdoor lights aren't on all night. Besides benefiting birds, your family will also be saving energy—and money on electricity!

An indigo bunting



**WOW!**

More than 8 billion candy hearts—also known as conversation hearts—are sold around Valentine's Day each year.

How to...



Help others feel special

This Valentine's Day, show family and friends what they mean to you.

Valentine's Day, which is celebrated on February 14, has origins that date back more than 1,000 years. While traditionally it is a holiday most commonly associated with love and affection, nowadays it can honor all types of relationships that bring people joy. In addition, Random Acts of Kindness Day is on February 17, which is another reason to spread a little happiness! Here are some ideas for sharing love and kindness now or anytime.

Get in the spirit

You can help family get in a festive mood with some decorations. Cut paper hearts from construction paper, punch holes in them, and then use string to hang them across a shelf, mantel, or bookcase. Another fun way to decorate is to write messages on paper hearts and stick them in unexpected places to surprise your family. You could put an "I love you" heart on the bathroom mirror or leave a note that says "You brighten my day" on a desk or in a backpack.

Spread positivity

You can make an extra effort to spread positive vibes on and around Valentine's Day. Offer a friend a genuine compliment, for example, such as praising their amazing

art project or their dedication to their sport, or thank a family member for being a good listener. You can also make others feel included. For example, you could invite someone new to sit with you at lunch or ask a family member to do a puzzle with you.

Go homemade

It's a longtime tradition to make valentines for the special people in your life. On your card, write a short sentence telling the person how much you appreciate them. You could mention a special quality they have or a fun memory from the past year. Homemade treats are another way to show you care. (Check out our cherry blossom card and strawberry shortbread cookie hearts recipe on the next page!)



Share a sweet treat.

Plan a surprise

One of the best ways to show a friend or family member you care about them is to plan a special outing just for the two of you. For example, you could invite your mom or dad on a hike or suggest a movie night with your best friend. You can also perform a random act of kindness, like cleaning the clutter out of the family car, surprising a grandparent with a phone call, or placing a surprise treat in a sibling's lunch box.

Fun holiday facts



Valentine's Day has been celebrated on February 14 since the 1400s, starting in Rome. The oldest known valentine was written in 1415 in France by Charles, the Duke of Orleans, in the form of a poem to his wife.

As early as the 1700s, Americans are believed to have started making and giving homemade valentine cards. The first store-bought cards were likely produced in the 1840s.

Around this same time, a British chocolate company, Cadbury, started selling sweets in special boxes for Valentine's Day. Cadbury encouraged customers to keep the boxes after Valentine's Day to store mementos, like love notes.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The sakura, or cherry blossom, is the unofficial national flower of Japan.



Make tissue-paper cherry blossom greeting cards

What you'll need

- Twigs with no leaves
- Heavy paper or cardstock, folded in half
- White glue
- Masking tape, optional
- Tissue paper
- Pencil
- Round items (like coins or lids) to trace
- Scissors
- Dull pencil

Instructions

1. Glue a twig to a card. You can lightly tape the stem in place with masking tape as it dries.
2. Stack several layers of tissue paper. With the pencil, trace circles in various sizes onto the top layer. Cut out circles (so you're cutting a few layers of paper at a time).
3. Make a blossom: Take two circles of the same size and stack them together. Hold the edges and use the dull pencil to gently push the center of the circle down. Remove pencil. Twist pointy bottom so that layers are twisted together. Repeat to make more blossoms.
4. Gently remove the tape, if you used it, from your card. Glue the blossoms all over each branch, with smaller blossoms at the top and larger ones as the branch thickens.
5. Write a note to someone special inside the card, then give it to them.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the oven, mixer, or microwave.

Bake up strawberry shortbread cookie hearts

Ingredients

- 1 (1-ounce) bag freeze-dried strawberries, crushed
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch slices
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 (9-ounce) bag white chocolate chips
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil

Instructions

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper and heat the oven to 325° F. Set aside 2 tablespoons of the crushed strawberries, then whisk the remaining berries in a medium bowl with the flour and salt.
2. Place butter and sugar in bowl of a stand mixer fit with a paddle attachment. Mix at medium speed until light and fluffy. Blend in vanilla. Reduce mixer's speed to low and add flour a little at a time.
3. On a sheet of parchment, form dough into a ball and pat into a disk. Top dough with another sheet of parchment and roll out to ¼-inch thickness. Cut out cookies with a heart cookie cutter. Space hearts 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets. Freeze 10 minutes.
4. Bake cookies until just set, about 15 minutes. Let cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes, then place on a rack to cool completely. Reserve the pans and parchment.
5. Put chocolate chips and oil in a heat-safe bowl. Melt according to package directions. Dip half of a cookie in chocolate, place on pan with parchment, then sprinkle immediately with strawberries. Repeat with remaining cookies. Let chocolate set. Makes about 18 cookies.



JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; JOY HOWARD; ON LEFT PAGE: ALAMY; GETTY IMAGES (2)



How to...

Throw a Super Bowl party

Get ready for the big game with these ideas, recipes, and crafts!

The football event of the year, the Super Bowl, takes place on Sunday, February 9, and it is the perfect opportunity to throw a party. Whether you're a football fan or you're just looking forward to the commercials, there's something for everyone. Here's how to start planning your party.

Make the guest list

Will your Super Bowl party be for your family, or will you have friends over? Talk to an adult about who to invite, and count how many people you're expecting. Then reach out to guests and let them know a time to arrive before the kick-off. Encourage guests to wear their favorite team's colors!

Set up the room

Start by surveying the space where you'll be watching the game. Make sure sofas and chairs are angled so everyone has a good view of the TV. You can add some additional comfy seating for your guests by plopping

large pillows on the floor. To decorate, hang homemade signs and team flags made out of recycled construction paper.

Prep the snacks

Talk with an adult about how many snacks to have on hand. Keep them nearby so no one has to miss anything (including the commercials). Classics are chicken wings, nachos, pigs in blankets, and precut vegetables like carrot and celery sticks with a variety of dips. You can also check out the fun recipes on these pages!

Play a game

You can get everyone involved in the excitement by playing a game, like Super Bowl Commercial Bingo, while you watch the action on the field. With an adult, search online for free playing cards for this year's game and print them out. The first person to cross out a row of consecutive squares wins!

FUN FACT
When the first Super Bowl was played in 1967, the Green Bay Packers beat the Kansas City Chiefs, 35-10.



Mix up sweet and salty snacks

What you'll need

For the base of the snacks, use any mix of sweet or salty treats, such as:

- Pretzels or popcorn
- Nuts
- Cereal
- Green candy-coated chocolates (like M&M's)
- Yogurt-covered or chocolate-covered raisins or peanuts
- Mini marshmallows

For the almond footballs:

- Almonds
- Sandwich bag with a twist tie or a rubber band
- Small juice glass
- 2 ounces (half a bar) white chocolate
- Scissors

For the green pretzels:

- 20 mini pretzels
- 1 cup green candy melts
- Tray or baking sheet lined with wax paper

For the pennant toothpicks:

- Green construction paper or cardstock
- Thin white paint pen (we used a "milky" pen)
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Toothpicks
- White glue and tape
- Small cups for serving



Instructions

- 1. Make almond footballs:** To make a piping bag, see steps 4 and 5 in the "strawberry footballs" recipe on the next page. Fill the bag with white chocolate, then pipe a vertical line and 3 horizontal lines onto each almond.
- 2. Make green pretzels:** Place candy melts in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat for 30 seconds and stir. Repeat in 15-second intervals, stirring between, until just melted. Dip each pretzel $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way into the melted candy and place on tray lined with wax paper. Let cool and set.
- 3. Make pennant toothpicks:** Use a ruler and a white milky pen to draw stripes on green

paper (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch apart). Make a triangle template and use it to trace triangles all over the striped paper. Cut out the triangles and glue them to toothpicks. Tape the flags to the outside of the serving cups.

- 4. Toss the sweet and salty snacks into a large bowl and mix gently.** Spoon the mixture into serving cups. Top with a few almond footballs, green pretzels, and a pennant toothpick.

TIP: For smoother, more dippable candy melts (or chocolate), you can stir in about $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of coconut oil. Add more coconut oil in small amounts if needed.



How to...

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the microwave.



Make chocolate-dipped strawberry footballs

What you'll need

- 16-ounce container of strawberries
- 2 (4 ounce) milk chocolate bars or 12 ounces chocolate chips (bars melt more smoothly than chips)
- Tray or baking sheet lined with wax paper
- Sandwich bag with a twist tie or a rubber band
- Small juice glass
- 2 ounces (half a bar) white chocolate
- Scissors

Instructions

1. Wash strawberries and pat-dry with paper towels. (The berries should be very dry before dipping.)
2. Break the chocolate bars into pieces and place in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in the microwave for 30 seconds and stir. Repeat for 15-second intervals, stirring between, until just melted.
3. Hold each strawberry by the stem and dip into the melted chocolate. Let the excess chocolate drip off and place berry on the tray or baking sheet. Refrigerate for 5 to 10 minutes.
4. Melt white chocolate. (See step 2.)
5. To make a piping bag: Place

one corner of a plastic sandwich bag in a small juice glass to hold it. Pour the melted white chocolate into the bag, then seal with a twist tie or a rubber band. Cut off the tiniest tip of the corner—just enough for a thin line of chocolate to come out.

6. Pipe a vertical white chocolate line down each strawberry, then pipe 3 horizontal lines across to create a football pattern.
7. Let the white chocolate set before serving. The strawberries can be stored at room temperature for a few hours or refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

DID YOU KNOW?
Americans eat nearly 1.5 billion chicken wings on Super Bowl Sunday.

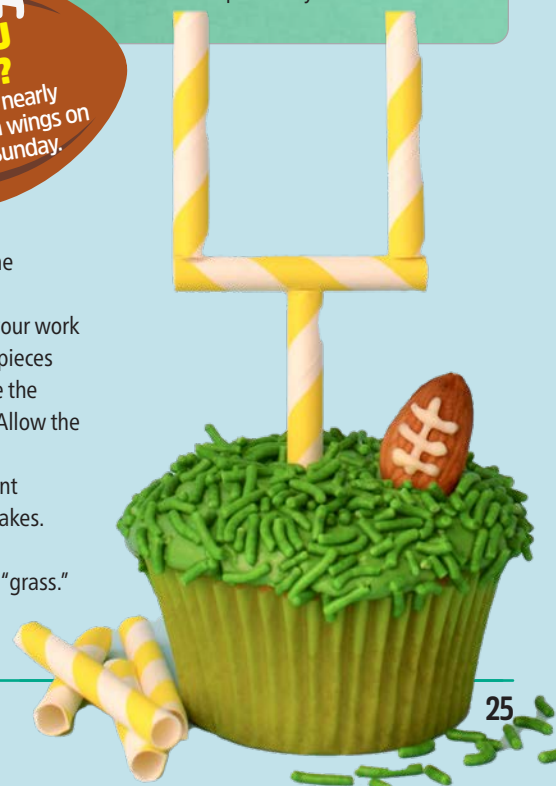
Create goalpost cupcake toppers

What you'll need

- Paper straws, 1 per cupcake
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Scissors
- White glue or hot glue
- Piece of wax paper or parchment paper that is large enough for all the goalposts to dry on
- Cupcakes
- Green frosting
- Green sprinkles

Instructions

1. Use the pencil to mark 3 increments on the straw that are each 2 inches long. Cut the straw into the three 2-inch pieces you marked, then set aside the remaining smaller piece.
2. Lay down a piece of wax paper or parchment paper to protect your work surface. Use white glue or hot glue to adhere two of the 2-inch pieces to the ends of the smaller piece, forming a "U" shape. Then glue the third 2-inch piece to the bottom, centered, to create the stand. Allow the goalposts to dry on the wax paper.
3. Top cupcakes with a "grassy field": Use green food coloring to tint store-bought vanilla frosting. Then, using a knife, frost the cupcakes. Shake the green sprinkles over the green-frosted cupcakes.
4. Once the goalposts are dry, gently poke them into center of the "grass."
5. If you wish, add an almond football to the top of the cupcake. (See step 1 in the "sweet and salty snacks" recipe on opposite page.)





How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

The oldest Lunar New Year parade in the US, dating back to 1851, takes place in San Francisco, California.

Celebrate Lunar New Year

Enjoy the traditions and culture of this special holiday that begins on January 29.

Lunar New Year, a celebration that dates back more than 3,000 years, marks the start of spring and a new year. It is observed in many Asian countries, including China, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore. "It's a lucky time of year and a time to celebrate traditions with family and friends," Danielle Chang, host of the culinary series *Lucky Chow*, told *The Week Junior*. Here are some ways to celebrate.

Know the history

Lunar New Year is celebrated on a different date each year and observed for 15 days. This year, Lunar New Year begins on January 29. The year 2025 is the Year of the Snake (see sidebar at right). Different regions have their own traditions. For example, in South Korea, Lunar New Year is called Seollal. It lasts three days, and children wear colorful *hanbok* (traditional Korean clothing). In Vietnam, Lunar New Year is called Tet, and people decorate their homes with flowers.

Get in the holiday spirit

The new year often starts with a deep cleaning to clear away the old and make way for a fresh start. Celebrations kick off with different generations reuniting for dinner. In another tradition, relatives

often give children in their families *hong bao*, which are red envelopes with money inside.

Decorate with symbolic touches

You can prepare for the holiday by making decorations with two colors associated with Lunar New Year: red (which symbolizes luck and happiness) and gold (which represents wealth). You can also incorporate the year's zodiac animal into your decorations. "You can draw pictures of a snake or make a snake garland out of colorful paper to hang," says Chang. Lanterns are a significant part of the celebration, and you can make your own (see the craft instructions on the next page).

Feast on traditional foods

Foods traditionally eaten for Lunar New Year have special symbolism. Many families stay up late the night before to make dumplings, which are believed to bring prosperity for the coming year. "Longevity noodles," which are unbroken lo mein noodles, symbolize a long life (see recipe on next page). Citrus fruits like oranges, tangerines, and pomelos are thought to bring good luck and abundance. Sweet glutinous rice balls, treats enjoyed by many celebrants at the end of the holiday, symbolize family unity and togetherness.



Red envelopes symbolize good wishes.

The Year of the Snake



The Chinese zodiac is a 12-year cycle of animals that represent each year. This year, 2025, is the Year of the Snake. The Year of the Snake also occurred in 2013, 2001, and every 12 years counting backward before that.

People born in the year of a particular animal are believed to possess the personality traits of that animal. The Year of the Snake is associated with being mysterious, wise, and eager to learn new things.

The other zodiac animals—each with their own personality traits—are the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. Last year's animal was the dragon, and the animal for 2026 will be the horse.

GETTY IMAGES; ON RIGHT PAGE: JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE



How to...

LOOK TO THE LIGHT
Lunar New Year lanterns symbolize driving out darkness and ushering in hope for the new year.



Create your own festive paper lanterns

What you'll need

- Recycled paper (such as maps, newspaper, sheet music, gift wrap), construction paper, or cardstock
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Optional: battery-operated tealight

Instructions

1. Cut a rectangle of paper about 8 inches wide and 5 to 7 inches tall. Fold it in half lengthwise (along the long side).
2. Use a ruler and pencil to draw a line $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in from the edge of the long side. Mark dots $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart along that line. Repeat on the folded edge, aligning dots with the first set of marks. Use the ruler to draw lines connecting each dot on the open side to the corresponding dot on the folded edge.
3. With scissors, cut along the lines, stopping at the first drawn line. (Do not cut all the way through.) Unfold the paper.
4. Cut two strips of paper for the edging. Each should be $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide and the length of the rectangle's long side plus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
5. Use the glue stick generously to adhere paper strips to the long sides of the rectangle, leaving the extra $\frac{1}{2}$ inch off at one end (which you'll use as a tab to glue the lantern closed). Roll rectangle into a cylinder. Re-press strips down if needed.
6. Use the glue stick to adhere the overhanging ends of the paper strips, closing the cylinder. Hold seams for 1 to 2 minutes until the glue dries.
7. Optional step: Add a handle to the lantern. Cut a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch strip of paper as long as you'd like the handle to be plus 1 inch. Glue the ends to the lantern top. Place a battery-operated tealight inside if you wish.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the stove.

Stir up "longevity" noodles

Ingredients

For the sauce

- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice cooking wine
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

For the lo mein

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced, with white, light green, and green parts separated
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup julienned carrots
- 1 cup julienned bell pepper
- Big handful baby spinach
- 14 to 16 ounces cooked lo mein noodles

Instructions

1. Make the sauce: Combine the cornstarch and all the sauce ingredients. Whisk them smooth to combine. Set aside.
2. Make the lo mein: Heat the oil in a large pan or wok over high heat. Add the garlic, white and light green scallions, carrots, and red pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, for about 2 minutes.
3. Add the prepared sauce, spinach, and noodles. Cook, tossing to coat, until the spinach is wilted and the vegetables are crisp-tender, about 3 more minutes. You can add a splash more water to the pan to loosen the sauce if necessary.
4. Divide the lo mein noodles among bowls and top with the dark green parts of the scallions. Makes about 4 servings.



How to...



WOW!
The average person spends the equivalent of 33 years in bed during their lifetime.

Boost your mood this winter

Follow these steps to de-stress and feel happier during the darkest days of the year.

If you're wishing for spring when there are still many weeks of winter left, one way you can feel more energized is to practice hygge. Originating in Denmark and pronounced "hoo-ga," this practice is when people take purposeful steps to feel cozy and content while appreciating the small things in life. Here's how you can get started with hygge to feel more at peace during the winter months.

Get rid of clutter

Take a look around to see what you have that you could pack away to use at a later time or give away to someone who could use it. You can choose to focus on one space at a time—such as your bedroom or the living area. With an adult's help, set up two boxes: one for belongings you or your family members want to store in a closet and another for items to donate. Once your space is tidy, you may find you already feel more peaceful.



Get comfy in snuggly clothing!

Think about light

In winter, there is less sunlight to enjoy because the sun rises later and sets earlier than it does at other times of the year. That's why a significant part of practicing hygge involves using soft light at home. One simple way to get

this effect is with lamps. A lamp delivers softer light than an overhead ceiling light does. You can also achieve a similar effect by setting out battery-operated candles.

Consider colors

According to hygge, the colors in your surroundings can affect how you feel. To feel cozier, talk to the adults in your family about adding warmer colors, such as golden yellow and peachy orange. These shades can make a space seem cozier compared to cool colors like mint green and icy blue. You might simply switch out pillow coverings or blankets from another room or place a bowl of oranges on a table.

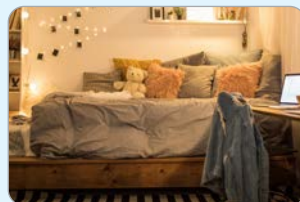
Bring the outdoors inside

You don't have to wait until spring to have a picnic. Spread a blanket on the floor of your living room, put on fuzzy socks and sweaters, and enjoy lunch or dinner with your family. You could also read or play cards or a board game there afterward.

Work on a puzzle

Research has shown that completing jigsaw puzzles can reduce stress and boost problem-solving skills. Set one up on a desk or table in your home, and with your family's help, aim to complete a few pieces every day.

Create a cozy corner



Setting up a snug space indoors to read, do homework, or just hang out can help you feel more focused and relaxed. Here's how.

Pick a spot. You don't need an entire room as your personal space—even a corner where you can place a bean bag, cushy chair, or futon can work.

Think soft. Make your space extra comfy with the addition of a fluffy pillow, soft blanket, or favorite plush toy.

Personalize it. Finish your space with special touches. Some ideas are a string of LED lights, a favorite photo on the wall, and a stack of books you love or want to read next.



How to...

FUN FACT
The heaviest sweet potato in the world, weighing more than 81 pounds, was grown in 2004 in Güime, Spain.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the oven.

Bake up veggie sweet potato boats

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, halved lengthwise
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1 medium broccoli crown, cut into florets
- 1 small yellow or orange bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Half red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes
- ¾ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ¼ cup tahini
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1 lemon, half wedge
- Pine nuts, for garnish (optional)

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 425° F. Use 1 tablespoon of the olive oil to brush the potato halves and season them with salt and pepper. Arrange on a baking sheet cut-side down. Bake on the middle rack for 20 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, bell pepper, onion, and tomatoes with the smoked paprika and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and spread on a baking sheet.
3. Keeping the potatoes in the oven, add the sheet of vegetables to the oven's lower rack and increase the temperature to 450° F. Bake

until everything is tender and the vegetables are charred in some spots, for about 15 minutes. Cool slightly.

4. Use a fork to lightly mash the flesh of each potato, keeping the skin intact. In a small bowl, whisk together the tahini, maple syrup, garlic, lemon juice, and remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil with 2 tablespoons water until creamy. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Fill each potato with one quarter of the vegetables and drizzle with tahini dressing. Sprinkle with pine nuts if using. Enjoy immediately. Makes 2 to 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

SEAL THE DRAFTS IN YOUR HOME

If you walk by a window or door in your home and feel a draft of cold air coming through, energy could be getting wasted. That's because the draft could be causing your home's heating system to work harder to keep your home warm. Research shows that effectively sealing drafts can reduce a home's energy use by up to 20% over the course of a year. If the draft is small, there are simple steps you can take to keep the cold air out. Roll up towels and put them under doors to create a seal against cold air. Lock windows to ensure they are tightly closed. On particularly cold days, keeping blinds and curtains closed can also help your home stay warm more efficiently.

Keep out the cold.





How to...

Share your hopes for America

As the US prepares to swear in its next President, be inspired by these historic words from past inaugurations.

On Inauguration Day on Monday, January 20, Donald Trump will be sworn into office as the 47th President of the United States. (Trump was also the 45th President, from 2017 to 2021.) Since George Washington in 1789, US Presidents have delivered an important speech called an inaugural address. The new President often uses the address to express their vision for the future of America. At past inaugurations, guest speakers have also shared

inspiring words. Please see below for a selection of famous quotes from past Presidential inaugurations.

As a reader of *The Week Junior*, you may have thoughts about America's future. We invite you to use the form at right to write them down. You can do this for yourself—or, if you'd like to share your form with *The Week Junior*, ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities.

"Here, on the pulse of this new day, you may have the grace to look up and out and into your sister's eyes, and into your brother's face, your country and say simply, very simply with hope—good morning."

—Poet Maya Angelou, Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration

"Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

—John F. Kennedy, 1961

"We have every right to dream heroic dreams. Those who say that we're in a time when there are not heroes, they just don't know where to look."

—Ronald Reagan, 1981

"When day comes, we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid. The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it."

—Poet Amanda Gorman, Joe Biden's 2021 inauguration

"I do not fear what is ahead. For our problems are large, but our heart is larger. Our challenges are great, but our will is greater."

—George H. W. Bush, 1989

"On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord."

—Barack Obama, 2009



GETTY IMAGES

How to...



First name

Age

State

What do you love most about America and why?

If you could describe America in three words, which words would you choose?

What are some of the hopes you have for our country in 2025 and in the future?

Draw a picture of what America looks like to you.

My 2024 memories

NameAgeGrade

What is your favorite memory from 2024?

What are you most proud of when you think back on 2024?

What is something that surprised you about 2024?

Who are the people you spent time with in 2024?

What will you remember most about the year 2024?

Draw a picture of yourself doing something memorable in 2024, or attach photos from the year that are meaningful to you.



How to...

Create fantastic crafts

These are the projects kids said they most enjoyed making this year.

PAINTED PAPER BOOKMARK

What you need

- Kraft paper or newspaper
- Heavy paper, like cardstock or watercolor paper
- Masking tape
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paint scraper, putty knife, or an old credit card
- Scissors
- Hole punch and ribbon (optional)

Instructions

1. Cover a table with kraft paper or newspaper to protect it. Tape your cardstock or watercolor paper to the kraft paper or newspaper to keep it steady while you paint.
2. Squeeze blobs of paint onto cardstock or watercolor paper.
3. Hold your paint scraper at the top of the paper, with the edge of it resting on the paper. Push scraper over the paint to move it around. You can pull the scraper in straight or curvy lines, squiggles, circles, or an arc, like a rainbow.
4. After your design dries, you can add more blobs of paint if you wish. Continue scraping paint around to layer shapes, or criss-cross stripes for a plaid pattern.
5. After your artwork is dry, cut it in strips to make bookmarks. You can punch a hole at the center top of each bookmark to add a ribbon. Cut a 9-inch piece of ribbon and fold it in half. Push folded end through the hole. Feed the two cut ends through the resulting loop and pull them to tighten. Trim the ribbon ends at an angle.



PENCIL CUPS MADE FROM RECYCLED CANS

What you need

- Recycled cans, cleaned out
- Scrap corrugated cardboard, such as from a shipping box
- Scissors
- Glue (ideally hot glue for a stronger bond, or white glue)
- Primer to create brighter colors (optional)
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic craft paint

Instructions

1. To make an animal head, cut a thin semi-circle from the cardboard. To cut the corrugated cardboard and make it easier to bend, cut the pieces so the lines inside the cardboard go up and down, not side to side. Cut as many heads as the number of cans you have.
2. With an adult's supervision, glue the heads onto the top of the cans. Allow the glue to set or dry.
3. Cut out cardboard ears, snouts, and arms. Glue the shapes to the cans and allow the glue to set or dry.
4. Paint the animals. Start with a main color, let it dry, and then add details like spots, eyes, and noses.



DID YOU KNOW?
A single pencil can be used to write up to 45,000 words.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET

How to...



FELT NAME BANNER

What you need

- Ruler, pencil, and paper
- Sharp scissors
- Felt
- Letter printouts
- Tape
- Paintbrush
- Fabric glue or tacky white glue
- String
- Big-eye needle or hole punch

Instructions

1. Use the ruler, pencil, and paper to make a template (pattern) for your felt flags. It can be a flag in the shape of a swallowtail (shown above) or a triangle, rectangle, or other shape of your choice. To make a symmetrical shape, fold the paper in half. Draw half of the shape with its center along the fold. Cut it out.
2. Trace your flag template onto the felt, then cut out the shape. Repeat this step to make as many flags as there are letters in your name (or the name of the person you're making it for).
3. Print out the letters in a simple sans serif typeface (such as Arial) in a size that will fit nicely on your flags. Cut out each letter, leaving some extra white space around it. Tape each letter to a piece of felt in any color you would like your letters to be.
4. With the scissors and an adult's help, carefully trim out each letter, cutting through the paper and felt at the same time. It's helpful to have at least two parts of the letter taped to the felt while you cut so it doesn't shift around. You can add tape as you go. For letters with a space in the center, like the letter O, carefully poke a hole in the letter with one blade of the scissors, then cut your way around.



5. With the paintbrush, paint a thin layer of glue onto the back of a letter and center it onto the flag. Repeat this step with the rest of your letters and flags.
6. Determine the length of your banner. Lay your flags on the table, evenly spaced apart. Measure this length and add a few feet to both ends to allow for hanging the banner. Cut a piece of string to this length.
7. Punch or poke a hole in the top corners of each flag, then string the flags together. Hang it up with an adult's help.

SUPER-CREATIVE SNEAKERS



What you need

- Canvas sneakers
- Pencil
- White eraser
- Water-based acrylic paint pens, like Posca

(Note: Permanent markers might bleed.)
• Optional: tissue paper or newspaper

FUN FACT
Sneakers got their name in the 1880s from their quiet rubber soles, which allowed wearers to "sneak" up on others.

Instructions

1. For this project you will be decorating a pair of sneakers. Ask a parent for permission first.
2. Decide on a design. You can choose a theme (like music, food, or dogs, as shown) or draw a mix of things.
3. Pick a palette. You could use all the colors in the rainbow or stick to a simple black-and-white scheme. You could also choose a limited palette of two or three colors. Black and yellow were used for the dog sneaker shown at left, for example.
4. If you want a firm surface for drawing, stuff sneakers with tissue paper or newspaper.
5. Optional: You can lightly sketch a design in pencil first. Use a white eraser to make corrections. Wipe off the eraser dust completely before you paint.
6. Use the paint pens to make doodles. To keep the colors clean and bright, start with lighter colors and let them dry.
7. Layer on the darker colors, such as black outlines, last. Allow them to dry, and enjoy!



How to...

Make kids' favorite recipes

Check out the drink, lunch, snack, and dessert our readers loved best in 2024.

CREAMY ORANGE SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 large navel orange, peeled and sectioned
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 teaspoons maple syrup
- Orange slices, for serving

Instructions

1. Combine the orange sections, coconut milk, vanilla extract, and maple syrup with 1 cup of ice in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Divide the drink evenly between 2 glasses, and garnish each with an orange slice. Drink immediately. Makes 2 servings.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, oven, stove, mixer, or blender.

MISO BUTTER RAMEN NOODLES

Ingredients

- 2 (3.5-ounce) packages uncooked ramen noodles, seasoning discarded
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1-inch knob fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 2 tablespoons miso paste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen peas, thawed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 large carrot, peeled and shredded
- 2 scallions, sliced (for garnish)
- Cilantro leaves (for garnish)
- Sesame seeds (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Add the ramen noodles and cook for 2 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the noodle water.
2. Melt butter in a large skillet. Add the grated garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the miso paste and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup noodle water and continue to cook until the miso is dissolved and the sauce has slightly thickened, for about 3 minutes.
4. Add the ramen noodles, peas, corn, and carrots and cook until heated through, about 2 minutes more. If the mixture becomes too sticky, you can add more noodle water, about 1 tablespoon at a time, to loosen.
5. Divide the cooked ramen noodles evenly among four bowls and top each with scallions, cilantro, and sesame seeds. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

WOW!
The longest noodle certified by Guinness World Records was more than 10,119 feet long and took 17 hours to make.



JOY HOWARD; ON RIGHT PAGE: ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE



How to...

PIZZA DIP WITH GARLIC KNOTS

Ingredients

Pizza dip

- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 cup pizza sauce (from a can or jar)
- Mini pepperoni (optional)
- Fresh basil (optional)

Garlic knots

- One 13.8-ounce package refrigerated pizza dough (such as Pillsbury brand)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

Instructions

1. Pizza dip: Preheat oven to 425° F. Using a stand mixer if you have one (or a spoon), mix the cream cheese, 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the Parmesan cheese, and the Italian seasoning until well combined. Spread the mixture into a small baking dish or an oven-safe skillet.
2. Spoon pizza sauce over the cheese mixture, then top with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each of shredded mozzarella and Parmesan. Top with pepperoni slices, if desired.
3. Bake the pizza dip until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 20 minutes. (Also prepare garlic knots to bake alongside the dip.)
4. Remove skillet from the oven and top with fresh basil leaves, if desired.
5. Garlic knots: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Unroll dough and slice into 16 strips (6"x1" in size). Tie each in a knot and place on sheet. Bake 15 minutes or until puffed and golden.
6. While the knots bake, melt the butter in a small pot over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and turn heat down to low. Stir continuously for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in salt and ground pepper, if desired.
7. With a pastry brush or a teaspoon, cover warm dough knots with the garlic butter. Sprinkle with Parmesan and minced basil, if desired. Dip garlic knots into the pizza dip and enjoy. Serves 8.

A SLICE OF HISTORY
The oldest pizzeria in the world, Antica Pizzeria Port'Alba, in Naples, Italy, started as a pizza stand in 1738.



SNICKERDOODLE BLONDIES

Ingredients

- 12 tablespoons (1.5 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg, plus 1 egg yolk, at room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cream of tartar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fine salt

For the topping

- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 teaspoons granulated sugar

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 325° F and generously grease the bottom and inner sides of an 8-by-8-inch baking pan.
2. Using an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add the egg and egg yolk and mix until thoroughly combined. Mix in the sour cream and vanilla. Stop to scrape down sides of the bowl as necessary.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking powder, cream of tartar, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the other bowl slowly, mixing until just combined. Using a spatula, spread batter into the prepared pan.
4. Prepare the topping: In a small bowl, mix together the cinnamon and granulated sugar. Sprinkle mixture evenly over the top.
5. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until blondies are set. Let cool completely before slicing. Makes 16 blondies.





How to...



SPIRIT OF GIVING

This year Americans gave a record \$3.6 billion on Giving Tuesday, an annual day in November that is dedicated to doing good.

Give gifts with meaning

The best presents for the people you care about don't have to cost a thing.

Exchanging gifts at the holidays is a tradition that dates back thousands of years. Children are typically excused from buying gifts because they cost money kids may not have. But the truth is that some of the best gifts don't cost anything. If you would like to give meaningful gifts to family or friends at the holidays—without having to spend money—here's how you can get started.

Consider the recipient

First, think about the person who will be receiving your gift. What are their interests and hobbies, or what foods do they like? What might they enjoy receiving that would tie in with those interests? For example, if they enjoy music, you can make them a personalized playlist or round up other young family members and give a musical performance. If they like baked goods, you can bake up something delicious for them. (You can find holiday recipes, crafts, and more at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities.)



Bake for someone special.

Create a memory keepsake

Another meaningful gift is a photo collage. With an adult's help, print out pictures of some of your favorite memories with the gift recipient, then glue them to a piece of cardstock. Another idea is to write a list or letter about why the recipient is special, print it out,

and place it in a frame made out of construction paper. You can also record and send a thoughtful video message highlighting why you love them or recalling one of your favorite memories together.

Share the gift of time

One of the best gifts you can give the people you love is time with you. With some cardstock or construction paper, make a few "tickets" for future outings and put them in a gift box. For example, if they enjoy hiking, create a ticket to "go on a hike together." If they like movies, you can write "share a movie night." You could also give the gift of spending time volunteering together for the cause of their choice. For example, the two of you could gather old sheets or towels to bring to an animal shelter, clean up a park or beach, or serve side-by-side at a soup kitchen.

Help make their lives easier

Another creative gift that doesn't cost a cent is to make a gift jar of chores. Use wood craft sticks or pieces of paper to write down ways you can assist a family member. For example, you could write "make dinner," "walk the dog," or "shovel the driveway." Then put the chores inside an upcycled glass jar. Give the jar as a gift and invite the recipient to choose a task when they need your help.

3 ways to exchange



Names in a hat If you have a big group of friends or family, you can simplify gift giving by having each person pick a recipient. Put names in a hat, and take turns choosing. Gather again to exchange presents.

Thrift exchange Organize a gift swap: Everyone brings an item in good condition that they no longer want. If you like, choose a theme like toys or clothes. Each person can bring one item to set out, then everyone can "shop" for a gift for themselves.

Yankee gift swap In this gift exchange, each person brings a wrapped present and chooses a different gift to unwrap. Once the gifts are opened, guests can decide to swap them until they get one they're happy with!

How to...



GLOBAL LEADER

Most of the world's cocoa—about 70%—is produced on small family-owned farms in West Africa.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Make holiday hot cocoa pudding cups

Ingredients

- ½ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- Large pinch salt
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons butter

Toppings

- Whipped cream
- Mini marshmallows
- Crushed peppermint candies, sprinkles, or nonpareils

Instructions

1. Combine the sugar, cocoa powder, cornstarch, and salt in a medium saucepan and whisk to combine, breaking up any lumps.
2. Set the saucepan over medium heat and slowly add the cream, whisking constantly. Continue whisking until the mixture is heated through and is thick and smooth, about 8 minutes.
3. Remove pan from heat and stir in the vanilla extract and butter until fully incorporated.
4. Divide pudding between 6 small espresso cups or teacups. Transfer pudding to the refrigerator to cool. Before serving, top with your choice of whipped cream, mini marshmallows, and/or candies and sprinkles. Makes 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

WRAP GIFTS SUSTAINABLY

Most wrapping paper that is used to wrap presents gets thrown away during the holiday season. Creating extra waste can harm the environment because gift wrap and ribbons take up space in a landfill. However, there are ways you can wrap your gifts nicely while still being mindful of the Earth. One option is to wrap items in brown kraft paper or paper shopping bags. This paper can be recycled or composted (turned into a mixture that improves soil), making it more environmentally friendly. You can tie packages with string you already have at home or reuse holiday decor to add special touches. Another option is to use gift bags, as they can easily be repurposed.



Use paper that can be recycled.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The Cincinnati Enquirer first reported staycations as a vacation option in 1944.



Take a winter staycation

Discover all the adventures that are close to home.

Winter is a special time of year to make plans to enjoy the season right where you live. You'll soon have time off from school, and many attractions are less crowded and expensive than they are during warmer times of the year. With an adult's help, taking the time to get to know your own town or city can help you learn its heritage and appreciate your surroundings in a new light. Here's how to get started.

Schedule it

Just as you would if you were going on a trip out of town, you'll want to plan your staycation for a time when you and your family members aren't busy with commitments. Talk to everyone about which days would work best. Also try to complete any household chores or homework you are responsible for in advance so you don't have to worry about those tasks during your staycation.

Pretend to be a tourist

If you have lived in the same place for a while, you might not explore some of the local attractions that a visitor might. Start by asking yourself this question: If I had a friend coming to town who has never been here, where would I suggest they go? Maybe there's

a historic home you can tour, holiday lights to see, a landmark you've overlooked, or a popular restaurant you've never been to. A local museum, zoo, or aquarium might have an exhibit you haven't seen.

Pursue a new activity

When it's cold outside, you can try a range of indoor activities on your staycation. Find out what sports your local recreation center offers, like volleyball, racquetball, or fencing. Your local library may have Lego clubs, makerspace activities, or chess lessons. Now is also a good time to sharpen your skills at winter activities like ice skating at your local rink. Many state parks permit sledding on designated hillsides or offer free or inexpensive cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowtubing.

Consider day trips

Although your town is a great place for a staycation, anywhere that is within a short drive—where you don't have to stay overnight—can be included on your itinerary. Talk to your family members about where you could go that is one to two hours away. Then enjoy exploring and making memories together!



Check out holiday lights.

Go on a food tour



Many cities offer guided tours of local food attractions. An adult can help you find one in your city, or you can plan your own with family and friends! Here's how.

Pick a theme. Decide with your group what you want to eat on your tour. You could focus on one food (like pizza) or the cuisine in a particular neighborhood.

Map your route. Discuss whether you'll take a walking tour or you'll need someone to drive. Use a mapping tool like Google Maps to plan your route.

Sample the food. Now it's time to try the food! You can jot down opinions and quotes in a notebook or a notes app and give scores based on taste.



How to...

FUN FACT

Former First Lady Nancy Reagan served pull-apart bread in the White House at Christmas in 1985, which led to its popularity in the US.



WARNING!

Ask for an adult's permission before using a mixer, the stove, or the oven.

Bake up glazed pull-apart bread

Ingredients

For the bread

- 1 stick butter, melted, plus more for greasing the pan
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Two 16-ounce cans store-bought refrigerated homestyle biscuit dough (such as Pillsbury Grands)

For the glaze

- 4 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
- 4 tablespoons butter, room temperature
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 3 to 4 tablespoons milk

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 350° F and generously butter a Bundt pan. In a shallow bowl, combine the brown sugar, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, allspice, nutmeg, and salt. Mix well.
2. Cut the biscuit dough into quarters. Working a few pieces at a time, dunk them in the melted butter, then transfer to the sugar and spice mix, tossing to coat. Place the pieces into the prepared pan and repeat with remaining biscuit dough.
3. Drizzle any remaining melted butter over the top and sprinkle with any remaining sugar and spice mix. Bake the pull-apart bread for 30 minutes or until the biscuit dough is puffed and browned. Carefully remove the bread from the oven and let it rest for 10 minutes before inverting it onto a serving plate. Let cool completely.
4. Meanwhile, combine the cream cheese, butter, powdered sugar, vanilla, and ginger in a large bowl and beat with an electric mixer to combine. Add the milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, while continuing to mix, until the glaze is the consistency of honey. Spoon the glaze over the bread and serve with plenty of napkins. Makes 16 servings.



LIFE HACK SNAP A GREAT FAMILY PHOTO

When the holidays are approaching and relatives are getting together, many families decide to take a group photo. You can help! First, gather your family members in a setting where they will be comfortable, like outside your home or in a nearby park. Position everyone in a spot where they are standing in full natural shade so the sun won't be dappled across their faces or in their eyes. Ask everyone to relax and to avoid standing up perfectly straight—if they bend a knee or an elbow, they will appear less stiff and more natural. Vary poses, from smiling to silly. Finally, take a couple of pictures after the photo shoot is over—candid shots often make the best photos!



Be yourselves!



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 11 million people in the US went ice skating at least once in 2023.



Try ice skating this winter

This sport is a great way to stay active in cold weather.

Ice skating has been a popular activity in the US for decades, and you don't need much more than a pair of skates to participate. Whether you're brand-new to ice skating or have skated a handful of times, you can follow a few steps to getting more comfortable on the ice and having fun. Here are some suggestions.

Choose your skates

The two main types of ice skates are figure skates and hockey skates. They have slightly different blades at the bottom, and beginners can use either one to skate around a rink. Most skating rinks rent skates for a small fee, or you could try borrowing a pair from a friend or relative. If you think you may be skating regularly, you could talk to an adult about whether it's worth buying a pair, either new or secondhand.

Follow guidelines

Experts suggest wearing a helmet when you go ice skating. Many people wear a ski or snowboarding helmet or a bike helmet. Elbow and knee pads can also provide protection if you fall. Even if the rink is indoors, gloves will keep your hands warm. (For more tips on what to wear, see the box at right.) Follow all

the rules of the rink to protect yourself and others from accidents. Never skate on a frozen pond unless it has been cleared for safety and adults are present.

Get your balance

Once you're on the ice, start by getting comfortable. Most rinks have a railing you can hold onto when you step onto the ice. While holding the railing, push one foot forward about six inches, stand on two feet, and then push your other foot forward. Next, try going from one foot to the other without stopping in between as you move along the ice. Once you feel ready, step away from the railing. Keeping your knees slightly bent to help with your balance, push one foot forward and then another.



Lace up for fun!

Start gliding

Next, practice gliding on skates. Gliding is when you move forward on the ice without moving your feet. Push off on one foot and then the other to gain some speed. Then keep both feet on the ice and see if you have enough momentum to glide. To stop, point your toes inward and slightly angle the blades of your skates down into the ice. If you fall while practicing, don't worry! Push yourself up to standing, and try again.

Ways to stay warm



Protect yourself from the cold while skating with these tips.

Dress in layers Start with a base layer, such as leggings and a long-sleeve shirt. Then add a sweatshirt. Finally, put on snow pants and a winter coat.

Add accessories Add a hat, gloves, and long socks. Tuck leggings into your socks, and put gloves on before your coat.

Take breaks When your fingers or toes get cold, your nose starts running, and your cheeks feel red, head indoors for a break. Take off any wet and cold clothing so your skin can get dry. You can also drink a warm beverage, such as hot chocolate!



How to...

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

A menorah ("lamp" in Hebrew) is a candleholder used during the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, celebrated this year from December 25 to January 2.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using a knife.

Recycle items to make a menorah

What you'll need

- Pencil
- 1 narrow cardboard tube (such as from a roll of aluminum foil), about 12 inches long
- Ruler
- Craft knife (optional)
- 1 toilet paper tube (or paper towel tube cut down to 4 inches)
- Scissors
- 5 straws
- White glue
- Corrugated cardboard circle, about 3 inches (such as from a box, or trace a jar lid or small bowl)
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paintbrush
- 9 yellow spice drops (or yellow tissue or construction paper)

Instructions

1. Mark the center of the long cardboard tube with a dot. Measure and mark four evenly spaced dots to the left and right of the center (they should be about 1 1/4 inches apart). You are creating holes for nine candles—one for each of the eight nights of Hanukkah plus one for the candle in the center, called the shamash, for lighting the other candles.
2. Ask an adult to carefully poke the tip of the craft knife or one scissor blade into the tube on one of the dots to make a small hole, spinning the knife around to slowly enlarge the hole. Put a straw into the hole to see if the size is right. The fit should be a bit snug. Repeat with the remaining dots.
3. Make a base: Hold one end of the long tube to the top side of the 4-inch tube, and trace a semicircle to make a spot where the long tube can rest. Cut out the semicircle, and use the scrap as a template to mark and cut a semicircle in the same position on the other side of the tube.
4. Glue the uncut side of the short tube to the center of the cardboard disc to make the base. Let dry.
5. Glue the long tube onto the base, centered. Let it completely dry.
6. Paint the menorah.
7. Cut four straws in half and one down to 6 inches to make "candles." To make "flames," poke the straws into the flat bottom of the yellow spice drops (or glue cut paper flames to the tops).



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

CONSIDER USING CLOTH NAPKINS

Using napkins made of cloth instead of paper is a simple way to help the environment and save trees. Paper products are made from trees that have been cut down and ground up. Paper factories also cause air and water pollution. And since dirty paper napkins contain grease, they can't be recycled, which means they'll end up in landfills. Americans use nearly 4 million tons of paper napkins, paper towels, and other kinds of tissue each year. Ask your parents about buying inexpensive cloth napkins instead. They are eco-friendly because you can wash and reuse them for many years. This saves money in the long run—and they look great on the table too!



Cloth napkins are eco-friendly.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The word "gratitude" is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness.



Express your gratitude

Being thankful for what you have can make you happier and healthier.

You probably say "thank you" often — such as when a friend holds the door, a teacher stays after class to help you with a problem, or a grandparent sends a gift for your birthday. At Thanksgiving, we have a special opportunity to give thanks and reflect on what we are grateful for. Showing gratitude makes others feel good, but it also helps you feel more joyful and less sad or stressed, according to experts at Harvard University. It is also something you can practice year-round. Here's how.

Do a "gratitude search"

Start by taking a few minutes to think about what you're grateful for. Is it someone or something that makes you happy or makes you laugh? Is it someone you know — like a parent, teacher, or coach — who helps support you, even when you don't ask? Is it something that makes your life better? Maybe it's an activity or a hobby you enjoy doing with others. It can also be something you have that you realize others may not have.

Make it a habit

Try getting into the routine of noticing and thinking about the things you're grateful for while you're going about your day. You can jot them down in a notebook or write

them on sticky notes and make a "gratitude wall" in your room. You could also write what you're grateful for on colorful scraps of paper and save them in a jar. Whenever you need a mood boost, you can take them out to remind yourself of what makes you feel happy and thankful.

Volunteer your skills

Giving your time to others helps them — but it can also benefit you, too. For example, if you rake the leaves or shovel snow for an elderly neighbor, you can take a moment to feel thankful that you were able to make their day easier. If you help a sibling with their homework, you can feel good about sharing your knowledge.

Share thanks with family

Thanksgiving is a perfect time to exchange feelings of gratitude with family. At the dinner table, you can suggest that each person takes a turn to share at least one thing they feel thankful for. You can also discuss taking a meditative "gratitude walk" between dinner and dessert, to appreciate the company of the people in your life and the natural beauty of the outdoors. You could even follow the holiday with a note of thanks to family members you love. (See the box at right.)



Do a good deed.

Thank-you notes



Whether you're thanking someone for a gift, their time, or just for being great, here's how to write a note to be proud of.

Start with a greeting. Begin with the person's name: "Dear ____" (fill in their name).

Be specific. Clearly write about why you're thanking the person. You can use phrases like "Thank you for the..." and "I am grateful for..." Then explain why you're thankful. If someone did something kind, tell them how that helped you. If they gave you a gift, add what you love about it.

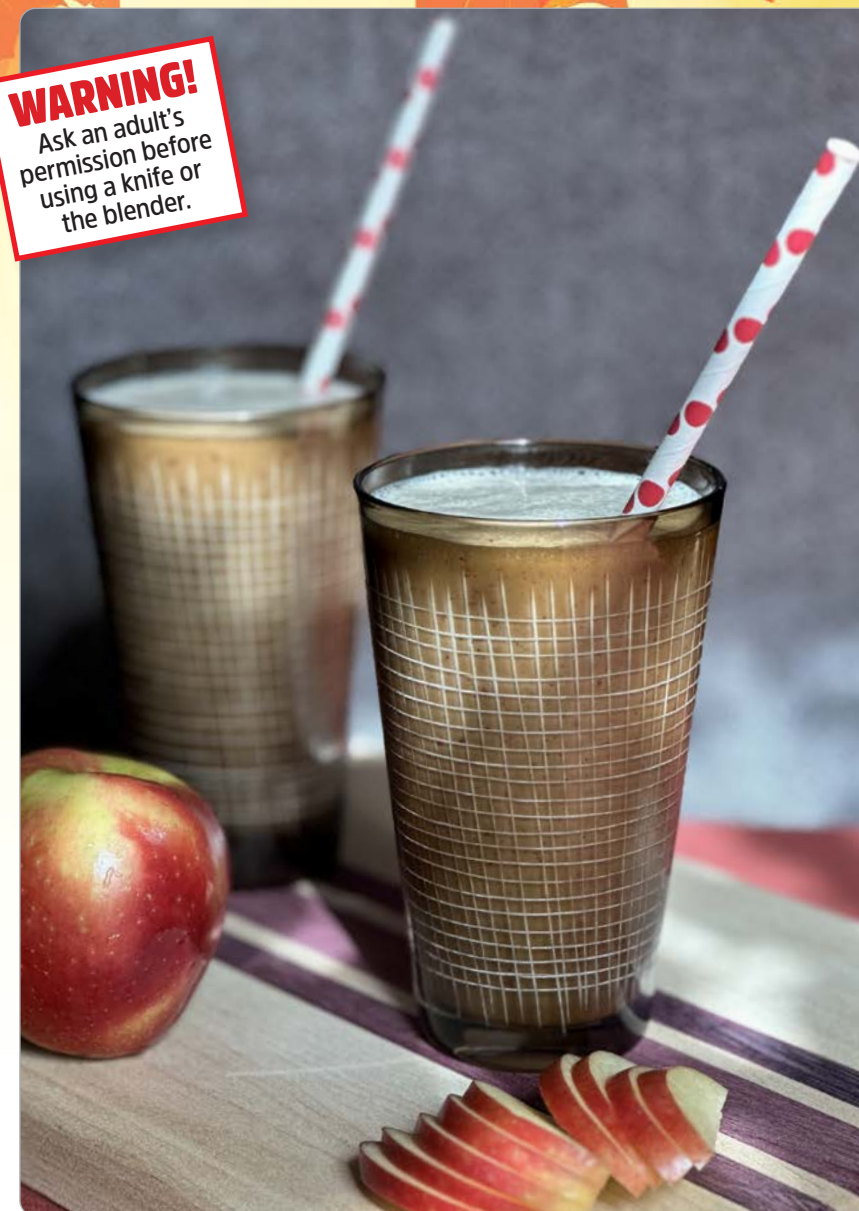
Sign your name to end the note. You can use "Warmly," "Sincerely," "Love," or whatever you wish before your name.



How to...

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the blender.



Whip up an apple pie smoothie

Ingredients

- ½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 2 apples, diced, plus slices for serving (optional)
- 1 cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon apple pie spice (or ¼ teaspoon each cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and ginger)
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 cup crushed ice

Instructions

1. Add the oats to the blender and pulse a few times to pulverize.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until smooth.
3. Divide smoothie between 2 glasses and serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.

FRUIT FAVORITES

In a 2023 survey, Honeycrisp was found to be the most popular apple variety in the US, followed by Fuji, Gala, and Granny Smith.



LIFE HACK SET THE TABLE FOR DINNER

When your family shares a meal, especially for the holidays, setting the table can make it more festive. First, decide with an adult whether you will follow a color scheme to match the holiday, such as red, orange, and yellow for Thanksgiving. Cover the table with a tablecloth or put placemats in front of each seat. Next, set out a dinner plate for each person. Ask an adult if you also need to add a soup bowl or salad plate on top. Next, set a glass to the top right of the plate. To the left of each plate, add a napkin with a fork on top. Place a knife to the right of the plate with the sharp side facing it, and set a spoon to the right of each knife. Add personalized placecards or other decorations as desired.



You can make a table special.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



How to...



Give flag football a try

Check out this fun, fast sport — no experience required!

Flag football is one of the fastest-growing sports in the US. No specific skills are required to play, and boys and girls of all ages can join. “Flag football is a sport for everyone,” Kelly Hantman, co-founder of Westfield PAL Girls Flag Football, in Westfield, New Jersey, told *The Week Junior*. “It’s an opportunity to participate in something just for fun and learn the values of being part of a team, like collaboration, facing a challenge, and learning success.” Here’s how to get started.

Understand the game

Flag football is a “no contact” sport, which means players don’t tackle one another like they do in regular football. Instead, each player wears a belt with two small flags. Players try to remove one or both of their opponent’s flags to end a play. The field in flag football is shorter than a traditional football field — about 50 yards long and 25 yards wide, with two end zones that are 10 yards deep. A game is played between two teams of five to eight players who attempt to score points by moving the ball down the field to cross the goal line and score a touchdown. A game typically lasts about 40 minutes and is split into two 20-minute halves.



Minimal equipment is needed.

Sign up to play

With an adult’s help, you can look for opportunities to learn and play flag football. Find out from your local recreation center, parks department, or Police Athletic League if they are hosting flag football clinics, leagues, and tournaments. You can also search for a flag football team near you at nfflag.com or nationalflagfootball.com. To play, you’ll need a belt with flags, a team jersey, and a football. Cleats are useful but optional.

Get some practice

“Speed is an advantage in flag football for running the ball and to pull flags,” said Hantman. Practice running up and down the field, flag pulling, and throwing and catching the ball. You can also practice tucking the ball close to you to protect it from opponents. With the help of a coach or an experienced player, you can also learn basic plays.

Enjoy yourself

Flag football is about learning the game and having fun. “Flag football also helps grow special bonds in families,” said Hantman. “Many are enjoying the experience of football together for the first time.”

Olympic debut



Flag football will be played in the Olympics for the first time at the 2028 Games in Los Angeles, California. The US, currently the top team in men’s and women’s flag football, will try to win gold. Mexico will also be a team to watch among both the men and the women.

Games will feature five players per team on the field. The venue for competition and the schedule will be announced closer to the Games.

“We have no doubt flag football is going to light up the Games when it makes its debut in four years’ time,” said Pierre Trochet, president of the International Federation of American Football.



How to...



FUN FACT
Some believe the word “gnocchi” comes from the Italian word *nocca*, which means “knuckle.”

Bake a batch of sheet pan gnocchi

Ingredients

- 1 pound package potato gnocchi
- 1 pint (10–12 ounces) assorted cherry or grape tomatoes
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 small head broccoli, cut into bite-size florets
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 ounces feta cheese
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

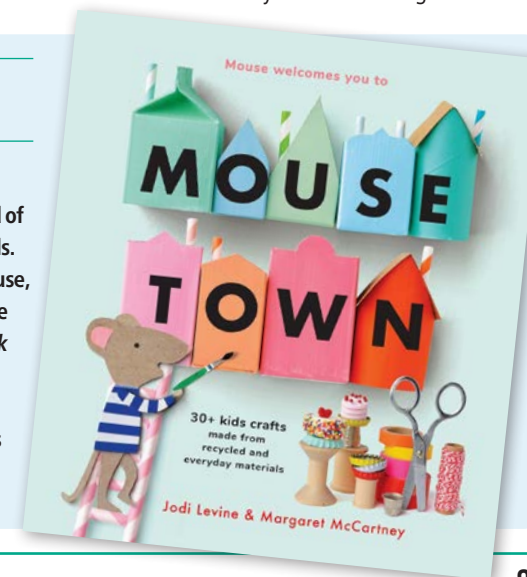
1. Preheat the oven to 400° F and line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine the gnocchi, tomatoes, onions, and broccoli on the prepared baking sheet and drizzle with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil, tossing everything to coat. Season generously with salt and pepper.
3. Cut the feta cheese into large chunks and scatter them on the baking sheet.
4. Drizzle with the remaining tablespoon of olive oil.
5. Bake gnocchi for 25 minutes or until the vegetables are tender and the tomatoes are blistered.
6. Carefully remove the pan from the oven and toss all the ingredients on the baking sheet to help the juice from the tomatoes coat the veggies and gnocchi. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

RECYCLE MATERIALS TO MAKE MINIATURE CRAFTS

Professional crafter Jodi Levine and illustrator Margaret McCartney have published a new book for kids and adults who love to make crafts. *Mousetown* features an imaginary world of more than 30 projects for Mouse and friends to make from recycled and everyday materials. “In *Mousetown*, we wanted to create a storybook where kids can follow the character, Mouse, through their day while learning how to re-create the story’s tiny scenes and props to make their own miniature worlds,” said Levine, who also creates the crafts published in *The Week Junior*. You can turn items like milk cartons and plastic bottles into homes and shops and make pie pans, picture frames, or wagon wheels from bottle caps. Levine told *The Week Junior* that she and McCartney were inspired by the miniature fictional worlds in children’s books they loved, like *Stuart Little* and *The Littles*. Levine said, “*Mousetown* is the book we wanted as kids so we could learn to make our own tiny houses, furniture, food, and more.”



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE ISUTCHEN/CREATIVE BOOKS; COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; ON LEFT PAGE: USA FOOTBALL; GETTY IMAGES; IAN OLYMPICS



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, 20% of people in the US went hiking, making it the nation's most popular outdoor activity.

Get closer to nature

Take advantage of fall weather — and boost your mood — by heading outside.

Autumn is a special time to enjoy the outdoors, when the weather is cool and crisp for absorbing the sights and sounds of nature. Research shows that spending time in a natural setting has many benefits—it can help reduce anxiety and stress, improve concentration and attention, and even lead to better sleep. Here are some ways to get started.

Go for a walk, bike, or hike

The easiest way to get closer to nature is to simply step outside. Gather family or friends and go for a walk or bike ride in your neighborhood or a local park. Besides getting exercise, you'll be stimulating your senses, from seeing a variety of colors in autumn leaves to feeling a breeze blow through the trees. With an adult's help, you can search for free guided hikes from a state park or local nature center. With the days growing shorter, some may offer "night hikes" in late afternoon, when you can spot stars in the sky or hear the sounds of owls, frogs, and other nocturnal animals.

Try birdwatching

November is a great time of year for birdwatching. It's when many bird species take flight on their migratory

journeys to warm destinations to the south. You can visit a bird sanctuary in your area or learn more about the birds in your neighborhood. The Merlin Bird ID app is a free bird guide with photos, bird sounds, and maps that can help you identify the bird species you hear or see.

Plant a fall garden

Fall is a good time to plant because it's less hot for plants but the soil is still warm. In parts of the US where the weather is milder, you may be able to plant leafy crops like spinach, broccoli, and kale through December. Speak with your local plant nursery about what you can plant at this time of year in your area. You can also bring nature inside by having potted plants in your home.



Walk with a friend.

Protect nature

Another way to get closer to nature is to show that you care for the environment with the choices you make. Small actions—such as recycling your family's cardboard boxes or walking to nearby destinations instead of catching a ride in a car—help reduce waste and pollution. You could also approach leaders at your school or local government about organizing a community cleanup to keep the outdoors beautiful for everyone.

Snacks for a hike



If you're going on a hike, bring plenty of water and a nutritious snack. Here are three ideas.

Trail mix You can buy trail mix at the store or make your own by combining foods such as dried fruit, nuts, cereal, and small chocolate pieces. Pack your mix in a reusable container or bag.

Muffins Homemade or store-bought muffins keep well on a hike. To make a muffin more filling, you could cut it in half and spread nut butter on it.

Fresh fruit Choose fruit that you can eat whole without having to cut it, and wash it before you go. Good picks include apples, bananas, and oranges.



How to...



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

TASTY TREAT

Chickpea fries are known as panisse in the south of France, where they are a traditional street snack.

Cook up delicious chickpea fries

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups chickpea flour
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Dipping sauce, for serving (optional)
- Lemon wedges, for serving (optional)

Instructions

1. Coat the bottom and sides of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with olive oil and set aside. In a large heavy-bottom saucepan, combine the water and chickpea flour and whisk well. Season the mixture with 1 teaspoon salt and some freshly ground black pepper.
2. Set the pot over low heat and bring to a gentle simmer while whisking constantly. Switch to a large rubber spatula and add the butter. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the butter is melted and the batter is quite thick, about 10 minutes.
3. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and use the spatula to help spread it into an even layer. Let the batter cool for 20 minutes, then cover and refrigerate until very cold—at least 2 hours.
4. Flip the baking sheet onto a large cutting board and unmold the solidified batter. Slice the batter into 1-inch strips, then cut into approximately 3-inch fries.
5. Heat enough olive oil to generously coat the bottom of a large skillet. Working in batches and with an adult's help, carefully add the fries in a single layer and cook them until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Use tongs or a spatula to carefully flip the fries once, then cook until the other side is golden brown, about 2 to 3 more minutes.
6. Remove fries to a plate and immediately sprinkle on more salt. Serve fries with your favorite dipping sauce (like honey mustard) and lemon wedges, if desired. Makes about 36 fries.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK ORGANIZE A COAT DRIVE

With winter coming, it's important that everyone has a coat to keep them warm. A coat drive is an event where people drop off winter jackets they don't wear anymore or that they have outgrown so the coats can be distributed to people in need. A coat drive not only helps others but is also good for the environment because coats get reused instead of being thrown away. Start by asking your school, place of worship, or community center if you can set up a collection box there. Then spread the word through flyers or ask an adult to post about the drive on social media. Once you have the coats, you can go to onewarmcoat.org to find a nearby organization to donate them to.



You can help others in need.



How to...

FUN FACT

About 29% of kids make their own dinner at least some of the time.



Get to know your kitchen

A famous cookbook author shares how kids can boost their cooking confidence.

The best way to get started with cooking—or improve the skills you already have—is to make friends with your kitchen, says Mark Bittman. “Exploring the kitchen—opening drawers and doors, seeing what’s in the fridge, learning about knives and tools—is the best way to begin cooking,” Bittman, author of the new book *How to Cook Everything Kids*, told *The Week Junior*. Here’s how to get started.

Begin with the ingredients

The first thing you’ll want to know about your kitchen is what ingredients—all the different food and seasonings—you have to work with. Ingredients can be found in several places: in the refrigerator, freezer, cabinets, or pantry. Look around, then touch, smell, and taste what you find. Seeing what you have can help you decide what you can make right away or whether you need to add to your family’s shopping list to make a recipe.

Take stock of tools and equipment

These are the nonfood items you’ll need in order to prepare, cook, and serve what you make. They can include mixing bowls, measuring cups, cutting boards,

pots, pans, spoons, whisks, and small machines, like a blender or food processor. Ask an adult what each is used for. You may be surprised that some have multiple uses. For example, a baking sheet can be used to bake cookies, but it’s also useful for roasting cut-up vegetables tossed in olive oil and salt and pepper.

Stay safe and be comfortable

Now that you know what you have to work with, you can get started. You’ll enjoy cooking much more if you take the time to set up everything you need to be comfortable—and safe. An adult can show you the proper way to handle kitchen tools and equipment and supervise while you use them and operate the stove or oven.

There’s a bonus to having help. “Cooking with people you love will help you talk and learn about where food comes from,” said Bittman.

Let go of perfection

Save the recipes you use and take photos of what you make, even if the finished dish didn’t turn out exactly as you expected. What’s important, said Bittman, is enjoying what you created. You can start by making his quesadilla recipe on the opposite page!



Author Mark Bittman

Learn the lingo



You may run across these cooking terms when making recipes. (Always have an adult supervise while you cook or bake!)

Stir You typically use a spoon to stir. But you can also swirl food with a spatula, fork, or tongs.

Whisk Whisking is beating with a whisk or fork until food is creamy, foamy, frothy, or fluffy.

Mash You can use a handheld masher, mixer, or ricer to mash food, like potatoes.

Puree Pureeing is like super mashing—making food smooth with a blender or food processor.

Simmer Simmer means what’s in the pot is gently bubbling.

How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

You can also use non-cheese fillings, such as a thin, hot layer of beans or mashed potatoes, to make quesadillas.

WARNING!

Ask an adult’s permission before using the stove.



Cook up extra-crispy cheese quesadillas

Ingredients

- 4 (8-inch) flour tortillas
- 1 cup grated melting cheese (like cheddar or Jack)
- 4 teaspoons vegetable oil
- Optional: chopped scallions, chopped black or green olives, red chile flakes or chili powder, salsa, guacamole, sour cream, or hot sauce



Instructions

1. Spread the tortillas on a clean, flat work surface and scatter the cheese evenly on top of each. Leave room at the edges so the cheese has room to melt and spread. Optional: You can top quesadillas with a fistful of chopped scallion, chopped black or green olives, or a sprinkle of red chile flakes or chili powder.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of the oil to a nonstick skillet over medium heat. When it’s hot and shimmering, use a spatula to move one of the tortillas to the pan. Cook, watching for the cheese to melt and the tortilla to look golden, 2 to 3 minutes (use the spatula to lift the corner and peek). Adjust the heat so it’s sizzling without burning.
3. Slip the spatula under one side of the tortilla and fold it in half. Let the quesadilla cook until the bottom half is brown and crisp, about 1 minute. Then use the spatula to flip over the tortilla and brown the other side the same way. When the quesadilla is done, move it to a cutting board, then repeat the recipe until you’ve used all the oil and tortillas.
4. While the other tortillas are cooking, cut the finished quesadilla into wedges, put them on a plate, and get the optional toppings (such as salsa, guacamole, sour cream, or hot sauce) ready so you can start eating. Serves 2 to 4.



LIFE HACK TRY EATING NEW CUISINES

When it comes to food, people often prefer the tastes and textures they have had before. But there are benefits to trying new cuisines. Eating new foods can help you discover more foods to enjoy. Food is also a way to explore and appreciate the traditions from different cultures. For example, in a Moroccan restaurant, chicken may be enjoyed with everyone gathered around a tagine (a cone-shaped cooking pot), using bread to scoop up the meal by hand. In a Japanese restaurant, slurping while eating noodles is a sign of appreciation for the chef. You can also make new recipes at home. Remember that it can take several tries before you decide you like it.

Traditional Moroccan dishes



QUESADILLA: FROM THE BOOK *HOW TO COOK EVERYTHING KIDS*; HOW TO COOK EVERYTHING SERIES BOOK 9 BY MARK BITTMAN. COPYRIGHT © 2024 BY MARK BITTMAN. TO BE PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 15, 2024 BY HARVEST, AN IMPRINT OF HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION. PHOTO BY GHAZALE BADIZAMANI. BOTTOM PHOTO AND LEFT PAGE PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



How to...

Plan a fun election party

Use these ideas to mark a big moment in our democracy with family and friends.

Election Day is almost here. On November 5, the Democratic nominee, Vice President Kamala Harris, and the Republican nominee, former President Donald Trump, will face off to see who becomes President. Americans will also cast votes for senators, representatives, governors, and local politicians. It's an important part of our nation's democratic process, so why not celebrate with an election party? Here's how to plan one.



Get festive

Break out the red, white, and blue decorations. Use craft supplies you already have to make a vote garland (see the box at top right for instructions). You can also make patriotic snacks and snack holders (see the box at bottom right for instructions). Try adding elephants (a symbol of the Republican Party) or donkeys (for the Democrats) to your decor.

Cast ballots

Everyone can vote at your election party! Create ballots so family members can choose their top candidates. You can also include other things to vote on, like what to watch on movie night or what your next family book club pick should be. Make a ballot

box (a decorated shoebox with a slot cut into the top works great). Then tally the votes and announce the winners during the party.

Watch the results

The main event is watching the election results on TV. Some polls across the country close at 6 p.m., but many states close theirs later. Still, you can start watching in the early evening because news stations will air informative segments before the results are final.

Map it out

News programs will be focused on which states each Presidential candidate wins. A candidate needs at least 270 total votes in the Electoral College to win the Presidency, and they receive these votes from different states. To keep track of the results, create your own electoral map placemat (see instructions below).



Be patient

The new President is usually announced on election night. In 2020, though, it took several days to count all the ballots and declare the winner. Several states have since made changes to enable faster vote counting. Some states may still take days to report their results.



Make an electoral map placemat

Instructions

1. Cut a paper bag into a 12-by-18-inch rectangle. Use red and blue paint to make stripes then let them dry.
2. With an adult, you can go to kids.theweekjunior.com/activities and print out the Electoral College Map. Use a glue stick to attach it to the paper bag.
3. On election night, use pencils, markers, or crayons in red (for the Republicans) and blue (for the Democrats) to color in each state based on its winner.

How to...



Create a vote garland

What you need

- Letters, stars, and flag templates (download them with an adult from kids.theweekjunior.com/activities)
- Recycled cardboard boxes, such as cereal or other dry-food boxes
- Recycled aluminum foil box (optional, for metallic stars)
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Foam adhesive dots (optional)
- String, like baker's twine

Instructions

1. Print out the templates. With scissors, trim off some of the white space around the designs.
2. Tape the letter and star templates to the colorful side of the cardboard pieces. Stick the flag templates onto the cardboard's plain brown side.
3. Use scissors to cut along the outlines of the letters and shapes, slicing through the paper and cardboard at the same time.
4. Tape or glue the letters to the cardboard flags (or use foam adhesive dots to make them raised).
5. Spell the word "VOTE" with the letter flags. Place a star between each one. Turn them all upside down and lay a string across their top edges, adding extra length on either side for hanging. Cut the string, then glue or tape it to the backs of the stars and flags.

Prep your party snacks

Election trail mix

In a large bowl, mix together 6 cups cereal squares (like Rice Chex), 3 cups yogurt-covered pretzels, 1 cup M&M'S (single-colored ones are sold at party stores or online), 1 cup yogurt raisins or cranberries, 1 cup mini marshmallows, and 1 cup pretzel sticks. Spoon mix into decorated snack cups (instructions below).

Polka-dot cups

Make a dot stamp by tracing a dime onto a white eraser. Have an adult help you use a craft knife to cut it out. Spread a thin layer of paint onto a paper plate, dip the stamp into the paint, and stamp the dot onto the cup. For striped cups, use a paintbrush to create lines.

Patriotic popcorn bags

Use a paintbrush to make stripes (or any design you like) on brown paper lunch bags. When the bags are dry, cut them down to your desired height with pinking shears (to make a zigzag edge) or regular scissors. Fill with popcorn.





How to...

Make Halloween treats and crafts

Get ready for some holiday fun with these festive recipes and decorations!

Ghostly bell pepper bites

Ingredients

- 12 black olives
- 6 baby bell peppers, halved lengthwise and seeded
- ¾ cup hummus
- 12 mozzarella pearls, halved

Instructions

1. Trim the end from half of the black olives and set the slices aside. Use the end of a plastic straw to press into each olive like a cookie cutter to cut 24 circles from the remaining whole and trimmed olives. (Squeeze straw to release any circles that get stuck.)
2. Fill each bell pepper with hummus. Add 2 mozzarella half eyes and black olive pupils to each. Serve immediately. Makes 12 pepper bites.

COLORFUL CUTENESS

Baby bell peppers are about 1.5 inches long and range in color from red to yellow to orange.



Recycled ghouls jars



What you'll need

- Clean recycled jars
- Black paint and paintbrush
- Facial tissues
- Scissors
- Toothpick or a black marker
- Needle and white thread
- Tape (any kind)

Instructions

1. Paint the lids of the jars black and allow them to dry.
2. Rip a tissue in half. Wad half into a tight ball. Place ball underneath the center of a new tissue to make a ghost.
3. Hold your ghost by the head and use a toothpick (or a marker) to dot paint on for eyes. Let dry.
4. Thread a needle and tie a knot at the end. Use the threaded needle to pierce up through the bottom of the jar lid so the ghost hangs without touching the bottom. You can add store-bought Halloween creatures, like bats and spiders, to other jars!

the balled-up tissue and through the outer tissue. Cut the thread off the needle, allowing a couple of inches of thread to protrude from the top of the head.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET (2); JOY HOWARD (2)



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The first US city believed to have celebrated Halloween was Anoka, Minnesota, in 1920.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a hot glue gun.



Paint-your-own cat and bat pumpkins

What you'll need

- Newspaper or any scrap paper
- Artificial pumpkins, any size (from a craft store or online)
- Black acrylic craft paint
- Paintbrush
- Light-colored paint pen or paint (like yellow or white)
- Black cardstock
- Scissors
- Hot glue or white glue

Instructions

1. Cover your work surface with newspaper or scrap paper to protect it. Paint your pumpkins black and allow them to dry completely.
2. In the meantime, cut ears for the cats and ears and wings for the bats, leaving an extra ¼-inch of paper along the side where you will glue it to the pumpkin. Fold that ¼-inch back to make a tab (or flap) for gluing. Optional: You can cut a slit in the center of the tab to make it easier to adhere to the rounded shape of the pumpkin.
3. Glue the ears and wings to the pumpkins. Hot glue is the easiest method as it sets quickly. If you use white glue, hold the items in place for a few minutes while the glue dries.
4. Draw features, like eyes and noses, on the pumpkins with a paint pen or paint. Don't forget whiskers for the cats and fangs for the bats!
5. Display your painted pumpkins on a shelf or in a window, or use as a decorative centerpiece on your family's dining table.

Spooky spider doughnuts

Ingredients

- 12 plain doughnuts
- 1 (16-ounce) container white frosting
- Purple food coloring
- ¼ cup chocolate frosting
- 24 brown chocolate pastels

Instructions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place a cooling rack on top. Microwave 1 cup of the white frosting on high for 25 seconds in a medium-size, microwave-safe bowl. Add a few drops of food coloring and stir until smooth.
2. Dip the top of each doughnut in the frosting and place on the rack.
3. Microwave the remaining white frosting in a small bowl on high for 15 seconds. Drizzle the frosting over the doughnuts to create webbed tops.
4. Place the chocolate frosting in a piping bag with a writing tip. To make each spider, gently press 2 chocolate pastels on each doughnut and use the piping bag to add legs. Keep cool until ready to serve. Serves 12.





DID YOU KNOW?
About 66% of eligible voters turned out for the 2020 Presidential election—the highest rate for any national election since 1900.



Get involved in the election

This is an exciting time to participate in our democracy!

You can make a difference in the upcoming national election—even though you’re not old enough to vote. “There are lots of ways for kids to get involved,” Andrea Hailey, chief executive officer of Vote.org, told *The Week Junior*. Here are some steps you can take.

Understand why elections matter

On November 5, Americans will elect the next President as well as thousands of national, state, and local leaders. “The results are going to affect kids’ lives, now and later,” said Hailey. After the winners take office, they will create and vote on policies in areas ranging from the cost of goods to healthcare, education, and the environment. The more you know about what’s at stake, the more you can discuss the issues with family and friends and the more exciting the election will be for you. With an adult, you can research what the Republican and Democratic parties stand for as well as the positions of different candidates.



Help get out the vote!

journey,” Hailey explained. As vote captain, you can help your family make a voting plan using the form at right. “We know that if people wait until Election Day to decide when they’ll vote, something may come up to keep them from participating,” said Hailey. So making a plan now can help ensure that everyone exercises their right. You can include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older cousins and siblings in your plan too, Hailey said. Also ask if you can join relatives when they vote—research suggests that sharing this experience helps kids form lifelong voting habits themselves.

Stay positive

One of the best parts of living in a democracy is that everyone is free to express their views. The election provides an opportunity to practice listening to other opinions, being respectful of differences, and stating your own viewpoints clearly and calmly. “The key is to continue using your voice in the way that you best know how,” Hailey said.

Make a pledge

Kids between ages 13 and 17 can pledge now at Vote.org to register to vote when they turn 18. You’ll get a text reminder to register on your 18th birthday!

What is Vote.org?



Vote.org is a nonprofit, nonpartisan website with information about voting in all 50 states. Your family can find:

An easy way to register

Anyone age 18 or older can check to see whether they’re registered to vote. If they’re not, registering takes two minutes. Deadlines vary by state.

Important dates

In many states, people can cast ballots during an early voting period before Election Day. Find out what the rules are for your state.

What’s on the ballot

Voters can get a preview of the specific races, candidates, and any special statewide or local issues that will appear on their ballot.

GETTY IMAGES (2); VOTE.ORG



Make a family voting plan

You can use this form to help make your family’s voting plan. After you fill it out, hang it in a prominent place, such as on your refrigerator, so family members can easily see and remember the plan. Mark your family’s calendar: Election Day is Tuesday, November 5!

Vote captain: _____

Who in our family will be voting? List their names here.

Which voting method will each family member use? For instance, will they be casting their ballot by mail? Will they be voting in person?

When will each family member vote? For example, if they are voting by mail, on which day will they mail their ballot? If they are voting in person, are they voting early or on Election Day? Where is their polling place, and when will they go?

Use this space to draw a picture of your family voting.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Calligraphy is a highly valued art in China that dates back more than 3,000 years.



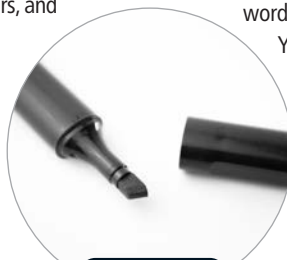
Learn the art of calligraphy

Find out how you can create your own beautiful lettering.

Calligraphy, which is also sometimes known as lettering, is the art of beautiful handwriting. It also can be a good way to reduce stress because practicing calligraphy is a mindful and meditative exercise. More people are discovering the joys of this creative art. Here's how you can get started.

Gather supplies

All you need is blank paper, a few markers, and a pencil. Craft stores also sell calligraphy markers and "brush pens." Brush pens have a flexible tip for making light or thick lines depending on the pressure you put on the pen. Once you have your supplies, take time to try them out. Try holding your writing instrument at a 45-degree angle to the paper. Experiment with putting various amounts of pressure on the pen or writing lines with the marker's pointy tip or its chiseled side.



A calligraphy marker

Practice the basic strokes

Start by making a row of "upstrokes." These are thin lines to draw starting from the bottom and finishing at the top. On the next row, make "downstrokes." These are thick lines drawn from top to bottom. Draw

each line slowly, which will help you more easily transition between them as you begin to combine these strokes to make letters. You can find examples of more basic calligraphy strokes to practice on the YouTube channel "The Happy Ever Crafter."

Design a special font

Write a word in pencil lightly on paper. It could be any word you like, such as your name or initials. You can write uppercase letters, lowercase letters, or a combination. You can even create your own font by leaving extra space around each letter to add special flourishes. For example, you might try adding polka dots, curlicues, or a nature theme of leaves and bees. If you'd like, give your font a name. (You may want to name it after yourself!)

Choose your color palette

When your marker dries, you can go back and erase some of the pencil lines. Next, you can add color to your letters. To give them a consistent look, choose two or three colors to use on each letter. When you're done coloring the letters, you can make them stand out by outlining them in a fine-tip marker.

3 fun ways to use it



Here are a few ideas for sharing your new calligraphy skills.

Cards You can give a friend or family member a card with a message you have lettered by hand. You could also write a holiday greeting or words of support to cheer someone up.

Party invites Make invitations to an upcoming celebration stand out by writing them by hand. You can also design place cards with people's names on them to use at the event itself!

Gifts You can write an inspiring or fun quote in calligraphy and frame it for yourself or someone else. It will be extra special because it's in your handwriting.

How to...



FLOWER POWER

Seed balls are small clusters packed with wildflower seeds. They help bring beauty and attract pollinators to gardens and urban areas.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a blender.

Plant seed balls for spring flowers

What you'll need

- Six large sheets of recycled newspaper
- Wildflower seeds (choose native, non-invasive flowers)
- Large bowl to soak the paper
- Blender
- Colander
- Food coloring (optional)
- Wire cooling rack (optional, to dry the seed balls)

Instructions

1. Tear newspaper into small pieces, 1 inch or smaller.
2. Place the ripped paper pieces in a bowl and cover them with water. Allow the paper to soak for at least 15 minutes.
3. With an adult's help, place the soaked paper into the blender pitcher until it's about one third full, then fill it up the rest of the way with water. (You can work in batches.) Blend well until it is a mushy pulp and there aren't visible pieces.
4. Pour the pulp into a colander and press out the water until it is still wet and moldable but not drippy. Repeat with the rest of the paper.
5. Optional: Add color. Divide the pulp into as many bowls as colors you would like. Add a drop of food

coloring into the pulp and knead. You can add another drop or two for deeper color.

6. Grab a small handful—about 1½ inch—of the paper mixture and knead in 2 or 3 large seeds or 5 to 10 small seeds. Roll it into a ball.
7. Dry the seed balls on a wire rack or a few sheets of newspaper for 2 to 4 days. Store them in a cool, dark place until you are ready to plant them or give them to friends or family as gifts.
8. Plant the seed balls by poking them halfway into moist soil or tossing them into hard-to-reach spots in your garden (if you plan on tossing them, be sure to soak them first). You can expect to see plants sprouting as the weather warms in the spring. Makes about 10 seed balls.



LIFE HACK

CLEAN OUT YOUR WATER BOTTLE

Over time, water bottles can collect dirt and mold—even if you can't see it. To prevent this, give your bottle a thorough cleaning at least once a week. First, check to see if it's dishwasher safe. If it is, you can put it in the dishwasher's top rack, where temperatures are lower, to prevent plastic parts from melting. If it's not dishwasher safe, or you've decorated it with stickers and want to avoid damaging them, wash it by hand. Use dish soap, a soft sponge, and a long-handled brush to scrub inside. Clean any straws with a straw brush. If there is a sealing ring on the cap, remove it and give it a good scrub. Once you've rinsed all parts of the bottle thoroughly, it's ready for a refill.



Deep clean your bottle at least once a week.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly 1.5 billion people around the world are vegetarian.

Eat more like a vegetarian

Try these ideas for embracing plant-based meals—at least sometimes!

In recent years, more people have chosen to eat more plant-based foods—such as beans, vegetables, and whole grains—and less meat, poultry, and fish. They may have meat sometimes, but their goal is to eat vegetarian more regularly. If you want to try it with your family, here's how.

Spread enthusiasm

You can share what you have learned about eating a plant-based diet with the dinner decision-makers in your home. They may be more easily convinced if you take a role in planning meals. "If you're coming up with a dinner idea, that's a big help to your family," Jenny Rosenstrach, author of the new cookbook *The Weekday Vegetarians Get Simple*, told *The Week Junior*. (See the book and her recipe for empanadas on the opposite page.) Take it a step further: See what ingredients you already have on hand, and make a list of what you might need to buy.



Add color to your meals.

Start with your favorites

Making the switch to eating less meat can be surprisingly easy. "A good place to begin eating more vegetarian is to start where you already are," said Rosenstrach. "A lot of the foods your family eats may already be vegetarian."

For example, if your family likes pizza, experiment with different colorful plant toppings, like eggplant or broccoli. If you like quesadillas, try adding diced, sautéed veggies such as poblano peppers, zucchini, or onions.

Aim for flexibility

Although many people are happy to eat vegetarian all the time, you don't necessarily have to aim for that. Rosenstrach said she and her family decided to eat meat only on the weekends, which made the change to eating more vegetables during the week easier. Ask a parent if that is something your family could try. Not having a strict rule may help you cut back on how much meat you eat, Rosenstrach said. Another option is starting to eat vegetarian for lunch when you pack it yourself or buy it in the school cafeteria.

Add a hook

When your family is experimenting, try to have at least one "hook" with your meal. "A hook is something you're especially looking forward to on your dinner table," said Rosenstrach. For instance, it might be a homemade flatbread to serve with a delicious new curry or a simple dressing (like olive oil, fresh lemon juice, and salt and pepper) you whisked together for a green salad.

A few must-haves



Keeping these ingredients on hand can make vegetarian meal planning quick and easy.

Premade pizza dough It's easy to make your own pizza when you have dough ready to go! You can find it in the refrigerated section at the supermarket.

Baked tofu Unlike regular extra-firm tofu, baked tofu already has its moisture expelled. That makes it fast-cooking. Fry it up in a skillet with vegetables for a satisfying lunch or dinner.

Frozen precooked rice Having precooked rice in the freezer means you can always make a meal of vegetable fried rice.

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How to...



FLAVOR BOOST

Sazón, a spice blend found in many Latin American cuisines, is Spanish for "seasoning."

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the stovetop or oven.

Bake up pinto bean empanadas

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 15-ounce can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 small jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1½ teaspoons sazón (such as Badia brand)
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 10 frozen 6-inch empanada discs, thawed
- 1½ cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 large egg, beaten
- Store-bought salsa

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 400° F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.
2. In a medium skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the beans, ½ cup water, and the jalapeño. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes while gently mashing the beans with a fork. (If they look dry, moisten with 1 tablespoon of water at a time.)
3. Add the tomato paste, sazón, and cayenne. Mix well until the beans resemble refried beans. Remove from the heat.
4. Place the empanada rounds on the prepared sheet pan. Spoon about 1½ tablespoons of the bean filling on one side of the dough round and top with 1 to 2 tablespoons cheddar. Fold the dough over, creating a half-moon shape, and press lightly.

5. Seal each empanada's seam together by pressing the edges with a fork. Repeat until you've worked through all the empanadas. Lightly brush each empanada with the beaten egg and use a sharp knife to poke a few holes in the top of each one. This will allow steam to escape while baking.
6. Bake until the empanadas are golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool briefly. Eat warm or at room temperature, served with salsa. Makes 10 empanadas.



Tip You can save extra empanadas to enjoy later. Freeze them in a freezer bag, then reheat them individually wrapped in foil at 350° F for 20 minutes.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

SHARE THE BENEFITS OF EATING LESS MEAT

There are many different reasons people might decide to eat less meat or none at all. Some people make the choice for ethical reasons, meaning they don't want to eat animals because they're living creatures. Another reason is because eating plants can be better for the environment. Farming vegetables and grains requires less water, land, and other natural resources than what's needed to produce meat, which means it's more eco-friendly to eat those non-meat foods. Explain to your family your reasons for eating less meat, then ask if you can be involved in shopping for and preparing meals with that goal in mind.

Prep meals together.





How to...

SUBMIT A STORY!

You can use your issue of *The Week Junior* to inspire a story—then enter it for a chance to be featured on the Story Pirates Podcast! Find out more at theweekjunior.com/creativewriting.



Where kids are the creative geniuses



The award-winning Story Pirates Podcast takes stories submitted by kids and turns them into comedy sketches and songs performed by professional comedians and musicians. “We love reading any and all stories by kids,” said Benjamin Salka, co-founder and chief executive officer of Story Pirates. You can find a special episode of Story Pirates featuring *The Week Junior* on Wondery and other major podcast platforms.

Try writing your own stories

Find out how to tap into the power of your imagination to capture your creative ideas.

Creative writing is a fun way to express your thoughts and emotions. One form of creative writing is a short story. “A story is like a playground for your imagination,” Lee Overtree, co-founder and creative director of Story Pirates, told *The Week Junior*. (To find out more about Story Pirates, see the box at top right.) “It’s a great place to experiment and try new ideas,” Overtree said. Here’s how you can get started.

Forget the rules

You may know what you would like your story to be about—or you might not, and that’s OK. “Sometimes it can feel intimidating to write a story because you have an idea of what the story has to be,” said Overtree. “But there is no right or wrong when you’re writing a story.” Creative writing doesn’t have to follow traditional rules of writing. When inspiration hits you, be ready to jot down the idea. Keep a pencil and notebook nearby or in your backpack or use a notes app on a device.



Dream up characters.

Start with a character

A great place to begin any story is with a main character. Think about who you would like this character to be, whether a person, an animal, or a mythical creature. Next, develop your character by answering a few questions: How does my character spend their time? What does my character love? What are they afraid of?

“Most important, ask yourself, What does my character want?” said Overtree. “Deciding what your character wants to happen in their life will be the engine that drives your story.” It can be anything! For example, one story written by Olivia, age 12, and featured on Story Pirates was about nachos that want to take over the planet.

Put an obstacle in their way

Once you know what your character wants, you can add drama or humor to your story by putting obstacles in their way. “This is where writing a story gets really fun,” said Overtree. “Those

obstacles can be annoying or even dangerous.” This is also when you can decide on the tone of your story. Ask yourself if you want your story to be serious or silly. “Many kids find that being silly is a great way to activate their imagination,” said Overtree. “So if you’re stuck for ideas about what obstacles to put in the way of your character, think of the funniest, weirdest thing you can.”

Read and revise

An important part of the creative writing process is continuing to work on what you wrote to try to make it even better. “Writing isn’t meant to be perfect the first time,” said Overtree. “That’s why we have drafts and revisions.” Try reading the first draft of your story out loud, and share it with a trusted family member or friend. Did your story make sense? Did it get the reaction you had in mind? For example, if you expected your friend to laugh, did they? You can go back to your story and make changes to get it to a place you’re happy with. Then enjoy it, whether your story is meant to be just for yourself or shared with family and friends.



How to...

WARNING!

Ask an adult’s permission before using a knife or the oven.



DID YOU KNOW?

An orange bell pepper contains more vitamin C than an orange.

Make a tasty veggie rainbow pizza

Ingredients

- 1 pound store-bought, uncooked pizza dough, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 20 cherry or grape tomatoes
- 1 orange bell pepper
- ½ cup torn baby spinach
- ¼ cup marinara sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- ½ cup frozen corn, thawed

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 425° F. Bring the dough to room temperature and lightly grease 2 baking sheets with olive oil. You will be making 4 personal pizzas.
2. Cut the tomatoes in half and chop the bell pepper. Tear spinach into small pieces.
3. Cut the dough into 4 equal pieces and gently stretch each piece to form a flat pizza shape. (Ask an adult if you need help.) Place on baking sheets.
4. Spread 1 tablespoon of marinara sauce over each of the crusts, leaving a ½-inch border around the edge. Sprinkle ¼ cup mozzarella evenly on top of the sauce on each crust.
5. Arrange the vegetable toppings evenly over the mozzarella in the order of a rainbow, such as red, orange, yellow, and green.
6. Using pot holders, put the baking sheets in the oven. Bake for 18 to 22 minutes or until the dough is golden and the cheese is melted and bubbly. Carefully remove the baking trays from the oven using pot holders. Let cool and slice into pieces.

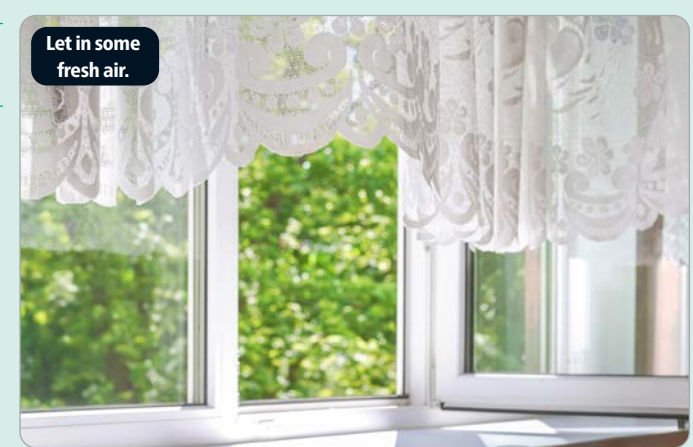


ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

HELP YOUR HOME SMELL NICE

Everyone likes their home to smell good. While stores sell air fresheners to scent your home, they may contain chemicals that can be irritating to some people and pets. To make your home smell better naturally, there are several things you can do. With an adult’s permission, crack open the windows on nice days to circulate fresh air. You can also talk to your family about putting fragrant house plants, like eucalyptus, lemon balm, or orchids, around your home. Baking soda is a natural way to absorb odors. Add half a cup of baking soda and six drops of an essential oil to a mason jar, poke holes in the lid to make a vent, and place on a shelf in the kitchen or laundry area.

Let in some fresh air.



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); STORY PIRATES



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The American Discovery Trail is the longest trail in the US—about 6,800 miles across 15 states.



Go for a hike outdoors

Enjoy the sights and sounds of nature while taking a long walk.

Now is a great time of year to take a hike—which is really a long walk in nature. The weather is cooler, the days are still fairly long, and trees may be just beginning to change color. Choose a weekend morning or afternoon, and ask family and friends to head out for a hike with you. Here's how.

Pick a path

The first step is to choose where you're going. You can keep it simple and walk around a local park. Or you could make the walk more of a hike and head to a trail at a local nature preserve or state park. To find family-friendly trails near you, go to alltrails.com. You can search for trails by different criteria, such as how close they are to home, length, or level of difficulty.

Get prepared

You'll want to wear sturdy sneakers or hiking boots. Add an extra layer of clothing, such as a light jacket, that you can put on and take off as needed. Grab a backpack that you can use to carry a hat, water, and nutritious snacks, like trail mix or apples. You could also pack extras, such as binoculars for viewing animals from a distance and a pencil and notebook for sketching.



Look for fall colors.

Add excitement

To get your group to take notice of nature on your walk, you could create a scavenger hunt. Make a list of items to look for. At the start of the hike, distribute copies of the list with pencils. As hikers find the items, they cross them off their list. The goal is to be the person who finds the most items. Your list could include flowers or leaves of different colors, spider webs, and mushrooms.

Seek out signs of animals

If you see flattened plants, it may be a sign that an animal was recently resting there. Animal tracks, feathers, nests, and animal droppings are also signs that animals live in the area. If your hike takes you near a stream or lake, you may be more likely to see animals, since many like to be near a water source.

Tread lightly

One of the main rules of spending time in nature is to "leave no trace." This means you want to leave the trail as it was when you found it. Carry out all your trash, and don't take any leaves, flowers, or branches from trees or bushes. You want to keep them there for the wildlife and other hikers to enjoy.

Types of trail markers



Many trails have markers to help guide you on the path. Here are a few kinds and what they mean.

Blazes Trails may use a system of "blazes" (marks) painted on trees or rocks. Colors have different meanings depending on the trail. For example, white rectangles may mark a trail's path. Find out what the blazes on your trail mean before you start your hike.

Affixed markers Some trails use markers made of metal, plastic, or wood. They are often nailed to trees at eye level.

Flags Some trails are marked with flagging tape or ribbon tied around trees and are meant to be easily spotted from the trail.



How to...

FUN FACT

Sneakers got their name in the 1880s from their quiet rubber soles, which allowed wearers to "sneak" up on others.



Doodle fun designs on your sneakers

What you'll need

- Canvas sneakers
- Pencil
- White eraser
- Water-based acrylic paint pens, like Posca (note: permanent markers might bleed)
- Optional: tissue paper or newspaper to stuff into the sneakers

Instructions

1. Ask a parent for permission before you decorate a pair of sneakers.
2. Decide on a design. You can pick a theme (like food, dogs, or music) or draw a mix of things.
3. Pick a palette. You could use all the colors in the rainbow or stick to a simple black-and-white scheme. You could also choose a limited palette. Black and yellow were used for the dog sneaker shown above, for example.
4. If you want a firm surface for drawing, stuff sneakers with tissue paper or newspaper.
5. Optional: You can lightly sketch a design in pencil first. Use a white eraser to make corrections. Wipe off the eraser dust completely.
6. Use the paint pens to make doodles. To keep the colors clean and bright, start with lighter colors and let them dry.
7. Layer on the darker colors, such as black outlines, last. Allow them to dry, and enjoy!



LIFE HACK

BRIGHTEN YOUR FRIEND'S DAY

Offering a kind word to someone can make their day. So why don't people do it more often? Research shows that many people underestimate the positive impact their words have on others. If you want to brighten someone's day, try giving a compliment. Be sincere. For example, you might tell a friend that you noticed something amazing they recently did or said. You can also make someone feel better with encouragement when they need it, such as, "Hey, you've got this!" You could also offer a gesture to brighten a friend's day, such as by sharing a special playlist or simply reaching out to make a plan to spend time together.

Your words can lift others.





How to...

PROSCIUTTO AND PLUM GRILLED CHEESE

Ingredients

- 4 slices crusty Italian-style bread
- 4 teaspoons mayonnaise
- 2 to 3 slices Havarti cheese
- 4 slices prosciutto
- 1 ripe plum, pitted and thinly sliced
- 2 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese

Instructions

1. Spread one side of each slice of bread with a teaspoon of mayonnaise. Place 2 pieces of the bread, mayonnaise-side down, in a large skillet.
2. Divide the Havarti cheese among the two slices, tearing it to fit on the bread. Place 2 pieces of prosciutto over the cheese, then arrange the plum slices on top. Dot the plums with small torn pieces of fresh mozzarella and top off the sandwiches with the remaining bread, mayonnaise-side up.
3. Set the skillet over medium-low heat and slowly cook the sandwiches, carefully flipping them once when the bottom bread is golden brown.



Tip: You may be tempted to increase the heat to speed things up, but the slower cooking will allow the cheese to melt and bread to toast at the same rate and will result in a superior sandwich. Makes 2 sandwiches.

GLOBAL APPEAL
There are more than 2,000 types of cheese produced around the world.



BRIGHTEN-YOUR-DAY BEET DIP

Ingredients

- ½ cup walnuts
- 1 clove garlic
- 3 small raw beets, peeled and roughly chopped
- ½ cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Fresh chopped mint, for topping
- Pita bread, for serving

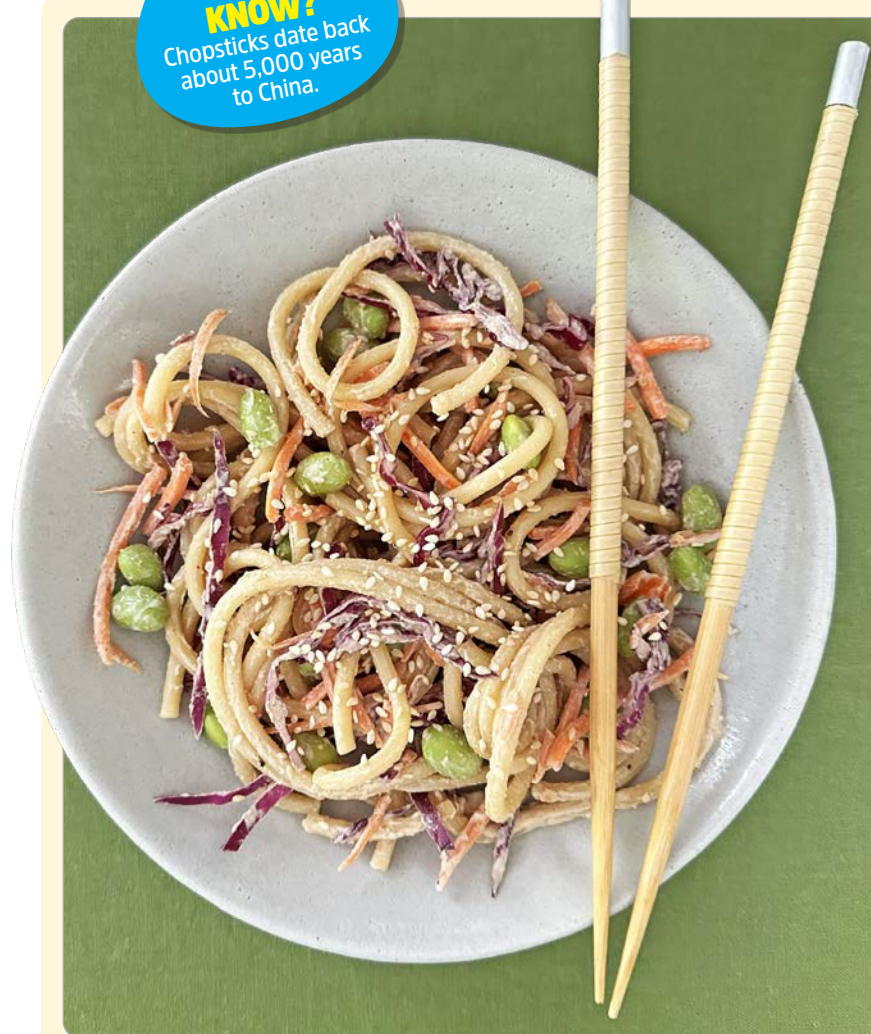
Instructions

1. Toast the walnuts in a dry skillet until fragrant, watching them carefully and stirring often to avoid burning. Remove toasted walnuts from the pan and let cool 5 minutes.
2. Finely chop a few of the toasted walnuts. Set aside for topping.
3. Combine the cooled toasted walnuts and garlic clove in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to finely chop. Add the beets and pulse until the beets are the consistency of coarse sand. Add the yogurt and lemon juice and puree until mostly smooth. With the machine running, pour the olive oil through the feed tube. Season the beet dip with salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Transfer to a serving bowl and top with chopped mint and the reserved chopped walnuts. Serve with sliced pita bread for dipping. Makes about 1 cup.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?
Chopsticks date back about 5,000 years to China.



COLD SESAME NOODLES

Ingredients

FOR THE SAUCE:

- 1 clove garlic
- ½ cup tahini
- 1 tablespoon creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- ½ cup hot water

FOR THE NOODLES:

- 8 ounces bucatini or spaghetti pasta
- 1 cup shredded purple cabbage
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup cooked edamame
- Toasted sesame seeds, for topping

Instructions

1. Prepare the sauce: Combine the garlic, tahini, peanut butter, soy sauce, rice vinegar, and sesame oil in a food processor or blender and pulse until mostly smooth. With the machine running, add the hot water a little at a time through the feed tube and process until smooth. The sauce may look seized (grainy) for a moment, but keep adding the water and it will turn creamy again.
2. Cook noodles according to package directions. Rinse under cold water and drain. Toss noodles with cabbage, carrots, edamame, and prepared sesame sauce until coated. Divide among bowls and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Makes 4 servings.

PARFAIT POPS

Ingredients

- 1 cup whole-milk vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup assorted fresh berries, gently mashed
- Ice pop molds (six 3-ounce molds)
- 2 tablespoons granola

Instructions

1. Layer the yogurt and berries into molds.
2. Sprinkle with granola, insert ice-pop sticks, and freeze 4–6 hours. Makes 6 pops.



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE



**BONUS
RECIPE
SECTION**

How to...

Simple, fun recipes to try

From breakfast to lunch, plus snacks and treats, these dishes are easy to make before or after school.



TROPICAL FRUIT SMOOTHIE BOWL

Ingredients

- 2 bananas, peeled, chopped, and frozen
- 1 cup chopped fresh pineapple
- ¼ cup unsweetened coconut milk
- ½ cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- Chopped kiwi and/or mango for topping
- Unsweetened flaked coconut, toasted, for topping

Instructions

1. Combine the banana, pineapple, coconut milk, and yogurt in a blender and purée until smooth.
2. Pour the smoothie mixture into two bowls and top with the kiwi, mango, and toasted coconut. Serves 2.

RASPBERRY OAT YOGURT MUFFINS

Ingredients

- ¾ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup milk
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups flour, plus 1 tablespoon
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 10 ounces raspberries, washed and patted dry

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 375° F. Generously coat a 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray or line the pan with paper baking cups.
2. Combine the oats and milk in a medium bowl and let sit 15 minutes to allow the oats to soak



up some of the milk. Add the egg, brown sugar, yogurt, oil, and vanilla and mix well.

3. In a separate bowl, whisk 2 cups of flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Fold the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until just combined. Do not overmix.
4. Gently toss the raspberries with the remaining 1 tablespoon flour to coat, then fold into batter.
5. Divide the batter among muffin cups and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until puffed and golden brown. Let cool for 15 minutes, then remove to a rack to cool completely. Makes 12 muffins.



How to...

EGG AND POTATO POCKETS

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup finely chopped red or white baby potatoes
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup baby spinach, roughly chopped
- 4 eggs
- 1 tablespoon cream or milk, plus more for brushing on top of the pastry
- 3 ounces shredded or finely chopped cheddar cheese
- 13-ounce package refrigerated puff pastry dough, such as Jus-Rol

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 375° F. Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add the potatoes and season generously with salt and pepper. Cook the potatoes, stirring occasionally, until tender and golden brown, about 8 minutes. Stir in the baby spinach and cook until wilted, about 1 minute.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk the eggs with the cream until combined. Add the egg mixture to the pan and cook, stirring and breaking up the eggs, until they are just set. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Cut the pastry dough into 4 rectangles roughly 5-by-7-inches in size and arrange on a parchment-lined baking sheet.



A BITE OF HISTORY

The first known recipe using puff pastry is from a Spanish cookbook in 1607.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, stove, oven, blender, or food processor for any recipes on these pages.

4. Spoon ¼ of egg and veggie mixture onto half of each pastry rectangle and top with a portion of the cheese. Gently fold the dough over the egg mixture and pinch the seams together with the tines of a fork.
5. Brush the top of each pocket with a bit of cream or milk and use a knife to poke a hole in the center of the dough.
6. Bake pockets for 15 minutes, or until the crust is golden and puffed. Makes 4 pockets.



PROTEIN PASTA SALAD

Ingredients

- 1 pound box pasta (cavatappi, or any short pasta shape)
- 1 ripe avocado
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 Persian cucumbers, halved lengthwise and cut into half moons
- 6 to 8 mini sweet peppers, seeded and chopped
- 15.5-ounce can butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, roughly chopped

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions, then drain and rinse the noodles under cold water to cool.
2. Meanwhile, combine the avocado, mayonnaise, and lemon juice in a food processor or blender and pulse until it is a smooth dressing.
3. Toss the cooled pasta with the cucumbers, peppers, beans, eggs, and avocado dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serves 6 to 8.



How to...



ALL OVER THE WORLD
Grandparents make up 20% of the global population.

Celebrate your grandparents

Try these easy ways to make sure they know you appreciate them.

September 8 is Grandparents' Day—a perfect opportunity to make your grandparents feel special. It's been a national holiday since 1979, but if you haven't celebrated it before, this could be a good year to start.

Volunteer together

The official theme of Grandparents' Day is "Do Something Grand." One way to mark the day is to spend it volunteering with your grandparents. Talk to them about what they might like to do. If they love the outdoors, you could spend time cleaning up one of their favorite parks. If they enjoy reading, find out if there are volunteer opportunities at the library. If they love to cook, you could collect nonperishable food or make bagged lunches to bring to a food pantry. Helping others is a great experience to share with your grandparents and will help you make memories you'll never forget.

Plan an activity

Another way to celebrate your grandparents is to simply spend time with them—which is many grandparents' favorite thing to do. You could plan to share a meal, go for a walk, read together, or invite them to one of your activities. If they don't live close by, you can video call

them to chat or to do something together, such as knitting or making one of their cherished recipes.

Record a message

You can also celebrate your grandparents by making them a special video message. Ask your parents for help recording you on video. You can start by wishing your grandparents a happy Grandparents'

Day, then share some favorite memories of times you have spent together. If you have siblings, they can be part of your video or they can create their own. It's like a digital card your grandparents can watch when they're missing you.

Preserve your family history

Many grandparents are the historians of their family. They have lived through different time periods, know the most about where your relatives came from, and knew your parents when they were young. One way to learn more about your family's past is to go through stored photos and keepsakes with your grandparents. Ask them to open up a couple of boxes and talk to you about the contents. Another option is to do a video interview with a grandparent about your family's history and share it with the rest of your relatives.



Spend time with each other.

The day's history



In 1963, Grandparents' Day was first made an official holiday in the Bronx, New York, after a local leader named Jacob Reingold pioneered efforts for a day to celebrate grandparents. In 1970, Marian McQuade (above), an elder rights activist, began to campaign for a special day of recognition for grandparents. Her advocacy led to Grandparents' Day in her state, West Virginia, in 1973.

A few years later, Congress (branch of government that makes laws) proclaimed the first Sunday after Labor Day to be National Grandparents' Day. On August 3, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a proclamation making the day official.

GETTY IMAGES (2); WEST VIRGINIA STATE ARCHIVES



How to...

Why my grandparents are important to me

Grandparents' Day is coming up on September 8, 2024. This is a day when people of different generations, like grandparents and their grandchildren, are encouraged to connect. We invite you to use this form to write down your thoughts about one or more of your grandparents—or any special older people in your life. You can also share this form with them. They may enjoy knowing what you have to say! We would also love to read what you write and see your artwork. To share your thoughts and drawing with us, ask an adult to email your form to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at theweekjunior.com/activities.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Grandparents' Day, explain why your grandparents are important to you.

If you could describe your grandparents in three words, which words would you choose?

What is your favorite memory of being with your grandparents?

Draw a picture of you with your grandparents.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.





How to...



FUN FACT
In the US, the first day of school depends on where you live and can take place from mid-July to early September.

Get ready for the school year

Follow this step-by-step advice for a smooth start.

As hard as it can be to say goodbye to summer, back to school is also a really fun and exciting time. You get to start new classes, meet new classmates, join sports teams or clubs, and see friends you may not have spent time with while you were on break. The beginning of a new grade also gives you an opportunity for a fresh start. Now is a great time to think about what you can do to help yourself have a successful year. Here are a few ways to get off on the right foot.

Establish a routine

Your summer schedule was probably very different than your school year schedule will be. If you can, start getting into a school routine a few days before you head back to class. This means going to bed early enough to make sure you can get at least eight to nine hours of sleep and waking up early enough to get dressed and eat breakfast before you head out the door. Get into the habit of making a checklist of what you need to remember each day (see the ideas at right).

Set up the night before

To make your mornings go smoothly, think about selecting an outfit and packing your lunch before you go to bed. You can also plan a time to get homework

done each day. Some kids like to complete theirs immediately after school, while others might find that evenings work better. Talk to an adult about what time would be best for you.

Create your workspace

In addition to making sure you have enough time for homework, having a dedicated place to do it can also help you be productive. With an adult's help, pick a quiet place, maybe in your room or in a shared family room, with a desk or table and a comfortable chair. Hang a calendar nearby so you can keep track of important dates like tests and project deadlines. Keep a drawer or basket full of supplies you need, such as pens, pencils, and a calculator. (You can personalize a pencil cup holder with the craft on the opposite page!) An adjustable desk lamp can also help with reading and writing.

Savor summer moments

Fall doesn't officially begin until September 22, so you can still squeeze in more summer fun. Talk to your family about activities you'd like to do one more time. This could be a trip to the local pool, going out for ice cream, or having a sleepover.



Pack up the night before.

3 checklist options



Paper notepad Research shows that writing things down—rather than typing them—can help people remember information better. You can use anything from a plain notepad to a decorative paper planner to make a list of what you need to do for the day.

Notes app If you use a device, a note-taking app is a convenient way to always have your list handy. You can delete items or mark them complete with a check mark emoji.

Whiteboard You can hang a small whiteboard on your refrigerator and write down everything you're supposed to bring to school, like your lunch, water bottle, and keys.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?
A single pencil can be used to write up to 45,000 words.



Make pencil cups from recycled cans

What you'll need

- Recycled cans, cleaned out
- Scrap corrugated cardboard, such as from a shipping box
- Scissors
- Glue (ideally hot glue for a stronger bond, or white glue)
- Primer to create brighter colors (optional)
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic craft paint

Instructions

1. To make an animal head, cut a thin semi-circle from the cardboard. To cut the corrugated cardboard and make it easier to bend, cut the strips so the lines inside the cardboard go up and down, not side to side. Cut as many heads as the number of cans you have.
2. With an adult's supervision, glue the heads onto the top of the cans. Allow the glue to set or dry.
3. Optional: Prime cans (and the cardboard head top) to cover any printing on the cardboard and to achieve a brighter color.

4. Cut out cardboard ears, snouts, and arms. Glue the shapes to the cans and allow the glue to set or dry.
5. Paint the animals however you like. You can paint the main color first, allow it to dry, and then add details like lighter spots, eyes, markings, and noses.

TIP Save different-size cans to organize all your desk items: taller cans for markers, pens, and pencils and shorter cans for crayons or scissors.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

HEAD TO SCHOOL ON FOOT

If you live close enough to your school, it's a great idea to walk or ride your bike whenever you can. This is not only fun and good exercise, but it also helps cut down on pollution from cars in your neighborhood. You can even talk to your family about starting what's called a "walking bus" for your block, which is a clever way of saying a group of kids meet up near their homes to walk to school together. Just be sure to always be safe while walking or biking. Stay on the sidewalk when walking, walk or ride in the same direction as traffic, cross at designated spots with crossing guards, and wear a helmet if biking.



Walk to school with others.



How to...

RIGHT ON!

About 90% of shells are "dextral," which means they open to the right.



Paint shells to keep or share

Summer is the perfect time to try this creative and social activity.

Painting seashells is a fun activity to do in the summer. Many people paint seashells to express themselves creatively. They also use them to connect with others by leaving them in places for people to find. Some people also paint seashells to sell so they can raise money for an important cause. Here is how you can get started painting seashells.

Collect shells. Inside the US and abroad, local regulations can vary, so first be sure any shells you find are OK to take and to leave behind later. You can pick up shells at the shoreline. A good time to look is during low tide. Remember that shells are animals' homes, so be sure the shells are empty! If you don't live near a beach, you can find shells at a craft store.

Set up a workspace. With an adult's supervision, pick a spot to paint. Put newspapers or an old tablecloth or towel down on your work surface, and gather the materials you need, such as paintbrushes, paint, and shells.

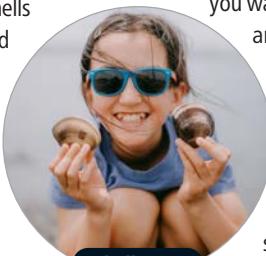
Clean and prep shells. First, wash your shells thoroughly. Rinse them in a bucket of warm, soapy water, and use an old toothbrush to scrub them clean.

Allow them to dry completely, then start painting with a white "base" coat: Paint the entire top side of the shell by either brushing on gesso or coating the shell's exterior with spray paint in flat white. Let the shells dry.

Decide on your design. A good method for beginners is to brush on your design with acrylic paints or use acrylic paint pens. You could paint a rainbow, an ocean scene, your pet, or an abstract pattern. If

you want to protect your design from flaking and fading from the sun, top it with a UV-resistant clear gloss spray. Allow your painted shells to dry completely.

Make a plan for your shells. Now you can choose to keep your shells or hide them for people to find. If you keep them, see some ideas for displaying them in the box at right. If you want to hide them, consider writing a brief message on the back of the shell suggesting that the finder either keep it or hide it again for someone else to discover. (Don't share personal details like your name or contact information.) Put shells in a public space where they're likely to be seen, such as on a park bench. With an adult's supervision, you could also set up a stand in your neighborhood to sell your shells and donate profits to a charity of your choice.



Shells are your canvas!



3 ways to display shells

Bowl or vase A simple and attractive way to store and display your shells is in a glass bowl or vase. Place it on a table or somewhere in your room where you can admire it.

Picture frame Using a toothpick and a clear craft adhesive glue, you can attach shells (painted or not!) around a plain wood picture frame. You can fill in any gaps between shells with even smaller shells. Continue the theme by placing a summery photo inside.

Shadow box Look for a "top-loading" shadow box at a craft store. Deposit your shells through the slot in the top. You can add to your colorful collection as you paint more shells.



How to...



FOOD FAVORITE

The average American eats about nine pounds of pickles per year.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Make your own batch of pickles

Ingredients

For the brine

- 3 cups vinegar
- 3 cups water
- 2½ tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons mustard seed
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns

For the pickles

- 1 large red onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 4 to 5 Persian cucumbers, quartered lengthwise
- 8 ounces radishes, trimmed and sliced into coins
- 8 ounces French green beans
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- Sprigs fresh dill

Instructions

1. Make the brine: Combine the vinegar, water, salt, sugar, mustard seed, and black peppercorns in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer. Stir until the salt and sugar have fully dissolved. Set brine aside and let cool.
2. Pack each of the prepared vegetables in a separate wide-mouth pint jar with a smashed garlic clove and dill sprigs.
3. When the brine has completely cooled, divide it among the jars, fully

covering the vegetables. Cover the jars and refrigerate overnight to allow to cure (become pickled). You can keep pickles up to 3–4 weeks.

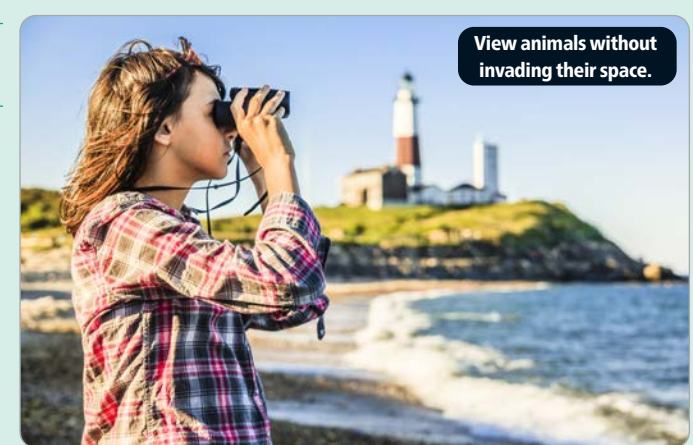
Tip The radish and red onion pickles make excellent sandwich, taco, and salad toppers. The cucumber and bean pickles are great for snacking straight from the jar!



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

WATCH WILDLIFE MORE SAFELY

Summer is a great time to be outside and see wildlife in nature. It's important to respect wild animals' space because getting too close can feel threatening to them. That can also be harmful to you because animals that feel threatened can become aggressive and choose to defend themselves. Rather than approach animals, choose a spot to sit and observe them. If you're in a car with your family and see an animal like a turtle or a deer on the side of the road, stay inside to watch quietly. A pair of binoculars can also help you be a watcher of wildlife, from birds to marine life, while keeping a safe distance.



View animals without invading their space.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was one of the first cities in North America to be designed in a grid pattern with numbered streets.

Be a better navigator

Improve your sense of direction—and avoid getting lost—with these steps.

Navigation skills are what you use to know how to get from one destination to another. You may have also heard these skills described as a “sense of direction.” Even with modern tools like GPS and Google Maps, it’s still useful to have basic navigation skills. You may not always have a digital map or wifi, and strengthening these skills can also increase your confidence that you’ll be able to navigate new places. Here’s how to get started.

Put away the device

You can start building navigation skills with a route you already know well, such as your walk or bike ride to a park. With an adult, take a slightly different path to get there. Pay attention to visual cues along the way. Without GPS, use the clues to find your way back to your starting point.



Commit names to memory.

Look for landmarks

Local landmarks, like architecture and landscapes, can help you determine what direction you’re facing. With an adult’s supervision, step out in your local neighborhood or town and look for the landmarks near your home. For example, do you see hills or mountains in the distance? Do you see a tall building? A highway? Ask a trusted adult if the landmark is north, south, east, or west of

where you’re standing. Practice identifying landmarks when you visit new towns and cities together. For example, pinpoint a landmark building to determine whether you’re heading north, south, east, or west.

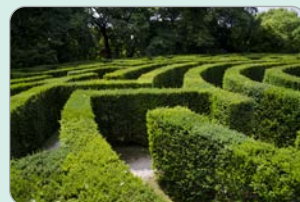
Know the street patterns

Many cities have streets arranged in a grid, which is a network of intersecting parallel lines. These cities include Chicago, Denver, Miami, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Their streets follow a pattern of north to south and east to west. Notice how the streets in a grid may be named according to a theme, like numbers or US presidents. Suburban streets may also have a pattern, like being named for US states.

Get a little creative

Another way to boost your navigation skills is to use creative stories to know where you are. To remember an intersection like Prince and Elizabeth streets, you might remember it this way: “A prince met Elizabeth.” You can also connect details to street names, like Main Street is where the main stores in town are or Lakeside Drive is on the water. You’ll build a mental map and feel more confident navigating your surroundings.

Master a maze



Mazes are fun to explore and designed to be challenging to escape. Here are a few tips on finding your way out of most simple mazes.

Follow the wall. Put your hand on the wall of the maze and maintain contact as you walk through it. You will eventually find your way out.

Always turn right. In most mazes, research shows, the “turn-right rule” works: Keep turning right, and you will ultimately get to the exit.

Ask for help. There will be staff members in or around the maze. If you’re not sure which way to go, it’s OK to ask!

How to...



THAT'S NOT ALL!
To find out more, see our feature about chocolate chip cookies on page 12!



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Bake up a staff favorite cookie recipe

During *The Week Junior* staff meetings, senior editor Alisa sometimes treats the editorial team to chocolate chip cookies made from her own custom recipe. To celebrate National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day on August 4, she is sharing her recipe with our readers!

Instructions

1. Whisk together the flour, salt, and baking soda in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. Stirring by hand with a fork, cream the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add the eggs and egg yolk one at a time, scraping down the sides of the bowl after each addition. Add the molasses and vanilla and mix well. (The combination might look slightly curdled at this stage—this is fine.)
3. Add flour mixture in two additions, mixing until just combined. Stir in chocolate chips. Cover the bowl and refrigerate overnight. (See more of Alisa's tips below.)
4. When you're ready to bake, position racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven, then preheat it to 350° F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Use an ice cream scoop to form ping-pong-ball-size balls of dough and place them 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets.
5. Bake 9 to 10 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking, until the cookies are golden around the edges but still look slightly doughy in the center. Let cool on the baking sheets for at least 2 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Makes about 42 cookies.

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 sticks (1 cup) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1½ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

ALISA'S TIPS FOR MAKING A PERFECT BATCH

A fan of baking since age 12, Alisa has made her chocolate chip cookies more than 50 times and perfected the recipe along the way.

She offers these tips for extra-delicious cookies.

Bring cold ingredients to room temperature. For best results, take butter and eggs out of the refrigerator one to two hours before you start. **Chill dough longer.** Alisa likes to make hers three days ahead of time—if she can wait that long!

Mix it up. Try making this recipe with other candies.

Alisa has used M&M's, white chocolate chips, and chopped peanut butter cups.

Keep dough on hand. You can freeze baking sheets of uncooked cookie dough balls until firm, then transfer to a zip top bag and store them in the freezer. This way, says Alisa, “you can make cookies anytime the mood strikes!”



Alisa and her cookies



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
In 2023, about 4 million people in the US went paddleboarding.

Try out paddleboarding

Have fun and improve your strength and balance with this popular water activity.

Stand up paddling (also called paddleboarding or SUP) is a recreational water sport with roots in Hawaii in the 1940s. In recent years, it has soared in popularity across the country. SUP is a fun way for kids and families to get out on the water and enjoy the outdoors. You can even find competitive paddleboard racing competitions. If you've been curious about the sport, here's how to get started.

Know how it works

Paddlers typically start out in a kneeling position on a sturdy floating board in the calm waters of a lake, pond, or ocean. They hold a single long paddle in both hands, then dip the oar's blade into the water and pull it backward to propel the board forward. Alternating strokes on each side helps steer the board. When they are comfortably paddling and picking up speed, they stand to continue paddling. To keep balanced, it helps to stand up straight and look ahead, not down at your feet.

Get the right equipment

Paddleboards are made of foam or resin and come in a variety of sizes for kids and adults. Some boards are

inflatable. You will need to wear a swimsuit and a life jacket. It's a good idea to also wear sunscreen or a long-sleeved shirt and a hat to protect yourself from the sun. A rental facility or paddling clinic can loan you a youth-sized board, paddle, and life jacket. Many outdoor stores also rent equipment.

Take a class

Have a parent help you search online for a youth stand up paddling clinic at a beach, lake, or pond in your area. For your first few times, aim to practice in calm, shallow water.

You can take a beginner's lesson at a local paddleboard center, which will also provide the equipment. You will learn how to climb onto the board in shallow water, move from your knees to a standing position, and use the paddle correctly. You will also learn to attach a leash from the board to your ankle. This keeps your board from floating away if you do fall into the water.

Keep practicing

As you gain more experience, you'll learn how to steer, turn, and come to a stop. The most important thing to remember—besides safety—is to have fun!



Begin on your knees.

Paddle on land



Land paddling, which is also called skate poling, is just what it sounds like—paddling a board on the ground instead of on the water. Here's how to ride safely.

Start on a long board. A longer board will have wheels set wide apart and feel more stable to stand on than a shorter board. With an adult, try out a few in a paddling shop, along with a stick.

Gear up. Protect yourself from tumbles. Wear a helmet, wrist pads, knee and elbow pads, and closed-toe shoes.

Learn from a pro. With an adult's help, ask a paddling or skateboard shop about lessons with an experienced instructor.

How to...



FUN FACT
Hawaiian rolls were first made in the 1950s at a bakery in Hilo, Hawaii.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the oven.

Make pull-apart cheesy ham sliders

Ingredients

- 12-pack Hawaiian sweet rolls (such as King's Hawaiian brand)
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons pickle relish
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- ½ pound sliced Havarti cheese
- 1 pound deli ham

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Use a bread knife to slice the block of rolls in half horizontally, keeping them intact as best you can. Fit the bottom halves into a 9-inch square baking pan.
2. In a small bowl, stir together the mayonnaise and pickle relish. Spread the mixture over the cut sides of the rolls. In another small bowl, add the melted butter, mustard, garlic powder, and sesame seeds and stir to combine. Set the butter mixture aside.
3. Layer half the cheese over the bottom rolls in the baking pan. Fold ham slices to fit onto the roll, then place the ham on top of the cheese. Cover ham with the remaining cheese slices. Fit the top half of the rolls into the pan.
4. Pour the butter mixture over the rolls and bake for 20 minutes, or until the bread is golden and toasty and the cheese is melted. Carefully remove from the oven and serve immediately. Makes 12 sliders.



ECO TIP
OF THE WEEK

SET UP YOUR OWN RAIN CATCHER

If you have plants in your home or outside, you know they need water to thrive. However, you don't have to always turn on your tap to water your plants. Instead, you can try to collect rainwater for your watering needs. This will reduce your reliance on water from your local source, which conserves it for use during drier periods. A simple way to harvest rainwater is to set up watering cans to collect water as it rains. Use the collected water to give plants a drink, then set the cans out again to gather water from the next rain. You can also talk to your family about getting a rain barrel, which collects larger amounts of rainwater to reuse.



Fill a can with collected rain.



How to...

Celebrate the Summer Olympics!

Get ready to watch the 2024 Games in Paris, France, from July 26 to August 11, by creating one or all of these crafts and recipes. Find out more about the Games in our Olympics preview starting on page 12!

Gold-medal cupcakes

Ingredients

- 2 cups white frosting
- Blue food coloring
- 12 cupcakes
- 12 (4-inch) strips sour tape candy
- 12 gold coin foil-wrapped chocolates

Instructions

1. Tint the frosting with the food coloring.
2. Working with one cupcake at a time, cover a cupcake with an even layer of frosting.
3. Fold a sour tape strip in half and press it onto the cupcake, as shown.
4. Add a gold coin at the cut ends of the sour tape.
5. Repeat above steps with the remaining cupcakes. Makes 12 cupcakes.

WRITE TO US!

If you make anything on these pages, ask an adult to email a photo and a quote to hello@theweekjunior.com!



Glowing tea light torch

Ingredients

- Paper towel tube or cardboard tube from wrapping paper, cut to your desired length
- Scrap corrugated cardboard (such as from a shipping or moving box)
- Scissors
- Gold craft paint and paintbrush
- Yellow, orange, and red tissue paper
- Glue or hot glue
- Glue stick
- Battery-operated tea light

Instructions

1. Make the torch: Trace one end of the tube onto the scrap cardboard and cut out the resulting circle. Glue the circle onto one end of the tube to close it.
2. Cut 2 strips of cardboard, long enough to wrap around the tube. Cut the strips so the lines inside the cardboard go up and down (as shown in the photo), not side to side.
3. Glue the wider strip around the closed end of the tube so it sticks up about 5/8" and then glue the thinner strip on top.
4. Paint the whole tube gold and allow it to dry.
5. Make the flames: Cut rectangles of the tissue papers and trim a long end into pointy flame shapes. Cut orange flame strips down a bit shorter and the red strip even shorter. Layer them, then use the glue stick to adhere them to each other. Use the glue stick to adhere them inside the top of the tube.
6. Turn the tea light on and place it into the well at the top of the tube. It should fit snugly. If it is too loose, scrunch up a small strip of tissue paper and wrap it around the tea light before placing it back in the tube.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The colors of the Olympic rings represent the five inhabited continents of the world.

Festive Olympic rings garland

Ingredients

- Small paper plates or bowls with a rounded rim edge
- Scissors
- Craft paint in blue, yellow, black, green, and red
- Paintbrush
- Masking tape, blue painter's tape, or washi tape
- Hot glue
- Ribbon

Instructions

1. Make the rings: Poke one of the scissor blades into the middle of the paper plate or bowl and cut out the center, leaving an intact ring.
2. Paint each ring in the colors of the rings in the Olympic logo: blue, yellow, black, green, and red. Allow the painted rings to completely dry.
3. Cut a single slit in the yellow and green rings. These two rings will be used to link all the rings together.
4. Link the rings as pictured: the blue, black, and red rings on top and the yellow and green rings on the bottom.
5. Once the rings are linked, tape the slits on the yellow and green rings closed. Next, rotate the seam so it's hidden behind an overlapping ring.
6. Tape all the rings in place at the overlapping points. Apply glue from behind and allow the glue to set before carefully removing the tape.
7. Glue or tape a length of ribbon to each end, behind the top of the rings, and allow the glue to set.
8. Hang your Olympic rings garland on a wall, from a mantel, or anywhere you'd like!

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a hot glue gun.



Sporty snack board

Create a fun feast with an arrangement of Olympic treats. Start with cut veggies, crackers, and a dip. Then add any of the following:

Cheesy archery targets Start with wax-covered cheese rounds. With an adult's supervision, cut each round with one large circle cutter and then one small one. Remove a strip of wax between the two circles to see cheese underneath. Use the end of a straw to cut a dot in the center.

Sweet and salty arrows Top pretzel sticks with gumdrop points.

Swimmer bears Take graham cracker bears, and with an edible marker, draw on swim goggles. Use a dab of store-bought icing to make a swimsuit and spread with a toothpick.

Torch treats Top mini cupcakes with vanilla frosting and gold star and silver sugar sprinkles. For the torch base, add chocolate-filled waffle cone candies. To make the flames, pipe on orange and yellow frosting with a star tip.

Basketball cookie sandwiches Draw lines onto a vanilla wafer cookie with a black food marker. Drop a small dollop of orange frosting onto another wafer cookie, then sandwich wafers together.

Super stars Cut a yellow bell pepper with star-shaped cookie cutters.



How to...



FUN FACT
The largest star, named VY Canis Majoris, is about 1,420 times bigger than the Sun.

Gaze at stars in the sky

To see something out of this world, all you have to do is look up.

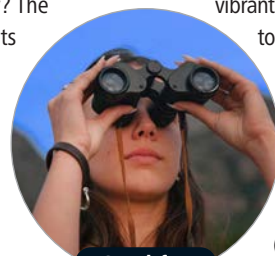
For thousands of years, the stars and planets that are visible from Earth have inspired stories, mythology, and people's imaginations. And it's no wonder: They're really interesting to look at and dream about. If you'd like to see what you can spot, here's how you can get started.

Notice the effects of the Moon

You've seen the Moon many times. But have you ever noticed how it affects the rest of the sky? The full Moon is like a giant light bulb, and its glow can block your view of the planets and fainter stars. That's why the best time to stargaze is at the end of the Moon's cycle, when it's really small, or during a new Moon when it's usually not visible. The new Moon happens about once a month. You can find the dates at stardate.org.

Find a good spot

When the new Moon phase arrives—or at least gets close—it's time to stargaze. Check to make sure it's not cloudy that night, and have an adult help you find an area away from headlights, street lamps, and neon signs. (They are considered light pollution and, like the full Moon, can make it difficult to see a lot of stars.) You



Search for bright objects.

can use a telescope or bird-watching binoculars if you have them. If not, you can see plenty with nothing more than your eyes. Remember that it can take up to 30 minutes for your eyes to adjust to the darkness.

Discover the planets

Once your eyes have adjusted, the brightest objects to look for first are other planets. You can see Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn without a telescope. Venus, the most vibrant planet in our solar system, should be easy to spot in the Western sky just after sunset. It looks like an extra-large star.

Focus on star patterns

Groups of stars can appear to make up different images in the sky. First, look for the Big Dipper, which is an asterism (pattern of stars) made of seven bright stars. Then use that to pinpoint more stars. If you follow the handle of the Big Dipper down, it will point you toward a bright red star called arcturus. It's inside the Boötes constellation (one of 88 officially recognized groups of stars), which is shaped like an ice cream cone. Then look up from there to spot a bright blue star called spica in the constellation Virgo. To find more constellations, check out a planisphere, which is like a map of the stars. You can print one at in-the-sky.org.

Sights in summer



You can see these celestial wonders this time of year.

A full Moon Catch sight of a full Moon, also called a Buck Moon, in the sky on July 21.

Mars and Jupiter Throughout July, Mars and Jupiter will steadily approach each other. By July 30, these planets will form a triangle with a crescent Moon.

A meteor shower A major annual meteor shower, called the Delta Aquariids, peaks this year with about 10 meteors per hour on July 29–30. To spot one of these "shooting stars," look away from the Moon and city lights toward the darkest part of the sky.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
The most popular baby names in the US in 2023 were Olivia and Liam.

Make a no-sewing felt name banner

What you need

- Ruler, pencil, and paper
- Sharp scissors
- Felt
- Letter printouts
- Tape
- Paintbrush
- Fabric glue or tacky white glue
- String
- Big-eye needle or hole punch

Instructions

1. Use the ruler, pencil, and paper to make a template (pattern) for your felt flags. It can be a flag in the shape of a swallowtail (shown above) or a triangle, rectangle, or other shape of your choice. To make a symmetrical shape, fold the paper in half. Draw half of the shape with its center along the fold. Cut it out.
2. Trace your flag template onto the felt, then cut out the shape. Repeat this step to make as many flags as there are letters in your name (or the name of the person you're making it for).
3. Print out the letters in a simple sans serif typeface in a size that will fit nicely on your flags. Cut out each letter, leaving some white space around it. Tape each letter to a piece of felt in any color you would like your letters to be.
4. With the scissors and an adult's help, carefully trim out each letter, cutting through the paper and felt at the same time. It's

- helpful to have at least two parts of the letter taped to the felt while you cut so it doesn't shift around. You can add tape as you go. For letters with a space in the center, like the letter O, carefully poke a hole in the letter with one blade of the scissors, then cut your way around.
5. With the paintbrush, paint a thin layer of glue onto the back of a letter and center it onto the flag. Repeat with the rest of the letters and flags.
6. Determine the length of your banner. Lay your flags on the table, evenly spaced apart. Measure this length and add a few feet to both ends to allow for hanging the banner. Cut a piece of string to this length.
7. Punch or poke a hole in the top corners of each flag, then string the flags together. Hang it up and enjoy!



Enter The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest!

Do you love taking photos of flowers, trees, or wildlife? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest*. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2024PhotoContest-8-10, and the form for 11- to 14-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2024PhotoContest-11-14. Winning entries will be featured in a September 2024 issue of the magazine. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules.



The deadline to enter is July 29.



How to...

SUPER-SIMPLE MANGO SORBET

Ingredients

- 4 cups frozen mango
- 1 cup frozen pineapple
- 2 to 3 tablespoons agave syrup (optional)

Instructions

1. Place all the ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until the mixture has the texture of coarse crumbs.
2. Turn on the processor and continue to blend, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed, until the mixture is smooth and creamy like soft serve. (This process may take several minutes.)
3. Serve the sorbet immediately, or keep frozen until ready to scoop. Makes 4 servings.



FUN FACT
Mangos are one of the most popular fruits in the world and were first grown in India more than 5,000 years ago.



WATERMELON PIZZA WEDGES

Ingredients

- 1 round slice watermelon, cut 1½ inch thick
- ½ cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup cherries, pitted and halved
- ¼ cup trimmed and sliced strawberries
- ¾ cup mixed blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries

Instructions

1. Cut the watermelon slice into 6 even wedges.
2. Top each watermelon slice with a heaping tablespoon of the yogurt, then decorate with the fruit. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

JOY HOWARD



How to...

WRITE TO US!

Did you try any of these recipes? We'd love to hear from you! Ask an adult to email a photo and a quote to hello@theweekjunior.com.



NO-CHURN PEACH COBBLER ICE CREAM

Ingredients

- 1 (14-ounce) can condensed milk
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¾ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1¾ cups heavy cream
- 4 graham crackers, broken into pieces
- 6 tablespoons peach preserves
- ½ fresh peach, roughly chopped
- 3 tablespoons pecans, roughly chopped

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the condensed milk, vanilla, and cinnamon.
2. In another bowl, use a hand mixer set on medium speed to whip the heavy cream until stiff peaks form, about 2 minutes. Gently fold the whipped cream into the condensed milk mixture.
3. Fold the graham crackers into the ice cream base, then pour the mixture into a loaf pan. Dot peach preserves on the surface of the mixture, then use a spoon to gently swirl it in. Smooth the top, then add the chopped peaches and pecans.
4. Freeze the ice cream until solid, about 6 hours. Makes about 8 servings.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE SHAKE

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, quartered, plus more sliced and set aside for serving
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2 cups vanilla ice cream
- 1½ cups prepared pound cake, cubed, plus more for serving
- ½ cup of your favorite type of milk
- Festive paper straws (optional)

Instructions

1. Combine the strawberries and sugar in a medium bowl and stir until the berries become glossy. Use a fork or potato masher to mash the berries into slightly smaller pieces. They will become more juicy.
2. Set aside ½ cup of the berries, then place the remaining berries in a blender along with the ice cream, pound cake, and milk. Blend until smooth.
3. To serve, spoon 2 tablespoons of the reserved strawberries into a tall glass. Pour milkshake on top and garnish with berry slices and pound cake cubes as you wish. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.





How to...

Make refreshing summer dishes

These delicious recipes for breakfast, lunch, snacks, and drinks use the best of the season's fruits and vegetables.

CRUNCHY RAINBOW BROCCOLI SALAD

Ingredients

FOR THE SALAD:

- 2 small crowns (about 5 cups) broccoli florets and stems, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 1 small red bell pepper, sliced
- 2 cups shredded red cabbage
- 1 large carrot, peeled and grated
- Fresh cilantro, for garnish (optional)
- Chopped peanuts, for garnish (optional)

FOR THE DRESSING:

- ½ cup natural peanut butter
- 4 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1-inch knob fresh ginger, grated
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, stove, oven, blender, or food processor for any recipes on these pages.

Instructions

1. Bring a small pot of water to a boil. Add the broccoli and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, about 1 minute. Drain broccoli, then rinse it with cool water to stop the cooking.
2. Pat the broccoli dry, then place it in a large bowl. Add the remaining salad ingredients.
3. In a medium bowl, combine all the ingredients for the dressing with ¼ cup water and whisk until smooth.
4. Drizzle the vegetables with half the dressing. Toss just before serving, and if you like, sprinkle with cilantro and peanuts. Serve with additional dressing on the side. Makes 8 servings.

CREAMY COCONUT LIME SLUSHIE

Ingredients

- 4 limes, halved
- ¼ teaspoon lime zest
- 6 tablespoons cream of coconut (such as Coco Lopez)

Instructions

1. Slice one of the lime halves into thin rounds and set aside.
2. Juice the remaining limes and pour the juice into blender. Discard the peels. Add the zest, cream of coconut, and 3 cups of ice to the blender and blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately and garnish each glass with a lime slice. Makes 3 servings.



DID YOU KNOW?

A single coconut palm tree can produce between 50 and 100 coconuts a year.



How to...

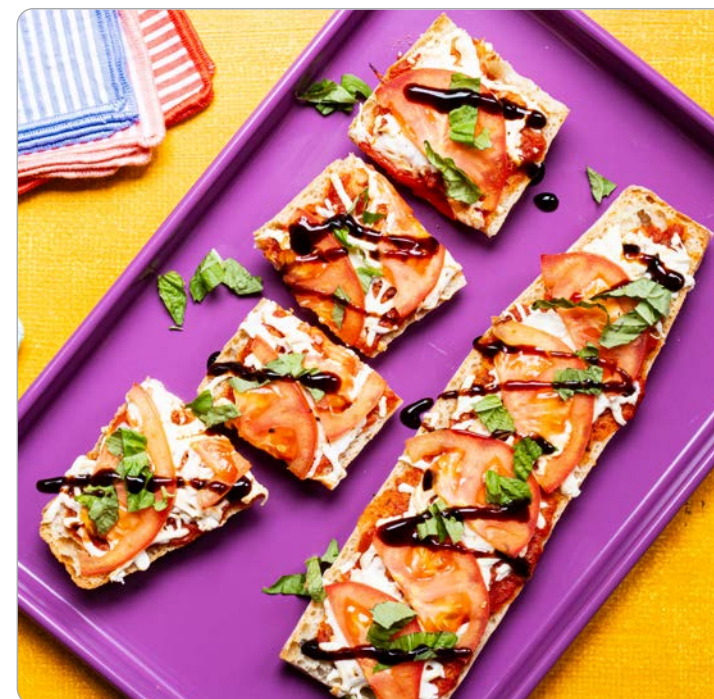
SMOKY CAPRESE FRENCH BREAD PIZZA

Ingredients

- 1 (18-inch) baguette
- ¾ cup pizza sauce
- 1½ cups shredded smoked mozzarella
- 1 large tomato, thinly sliced into half moons
- Handful of fresh basil leaves, chopped
- Balsamic glaze, for drizzling (optional)

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 400° F. Halve the baguette crosswise, then halve each piece lengthwise to form four equal pieces. Arrange them cut-side up on a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil.
2. Spoon and evenly spread 3 tablespoons of pizza sauce onto each baguette. Then top each baguette with ⅓ cup of cheese, followed by a layer of tomato slices.
3. Bake until the bread is golden around the edges and the cheese is melted, about 10 minutes.
4. Let cool slightly, then sprinkle with basil and, if using, balsamic glaze. Slice and serve immediately. Makes 4 pizzas.



SLICE OF HISTORY

The word "pizza" was first mentioned in a manuscript found in southern Italy from the year 997.

ROASTED CORN QUESADILLAS

Ingredients

- 4 (8-inch) flour tortillas
- ½ cup tomatillo salsa, plus more for serving
- 1½ cups frozen fire roasted corn, thawed
- 1 cup shredded Mexican blend cheese
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, leaves and tender stems
- Vegetable oil

Instructions

1. Use the back of a spoon to evenly spread 2 tablespoons of salsa onto a tortilla.
2. Scatter half of the tortilla with ½ cup of corn and add ¼ cup of cheese on top, followed by ¼ of the cilantro.
3. Fold the other half of the tortilla over the filling to form a half circle. Repeat with the other tortillas and ingredients.
4. Brush a nonstick skillet lightly with vegetable oil. Place skillet on stovetop over medium-low heat. Add a quesadilla and cook until golden and toasted on the underside, about 4 minutes. Use a spatula to flip it and toast the other side, about 2 minutes. Slide the quesadilla onto a plate and repeat steps with the other quesadillas.
5. Slice each into 3 wedges and serve immediately with more salsa. Makes 4 servings.



JOY HOWARD



Contest



PHOTO FACT
The first known underwater color photograph was taken off the Florida Keys in 1926.

Take amazing pictures of nature

Learn to capture the outdoor beauty all around you.

Nature photography is about taking pictures of natural elements outdoors, from wildlife to weather. It can be done anywhere, with a camera or a phone, and is a great way to document the natural scenery around you. "Nature photography is an amazing tool that you can use to capture and share what's important to you," professional nature photographer Jesse Burke told *The Week Junior*. Here's how to get started.

Pick a setting

First, choose where you want to take nature photos. If you're a beginner, you can start in your neighborhood or a local park. You can shoot wildlife, like birds or squirrels, or zoom in on trees that reflect a change of seasons. As you gain experience, you can work up to bigger settings, like landscapes. Try to tell a story with photos, Burke suggests. Take some of the overall scenery, then wildlife, and a few close-ups, like dew drops on a leaf. "When you look at all the pictures together later, you get a richer narrative," he says.

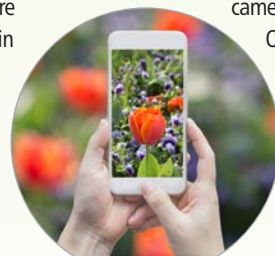
Use natural light to your advantage

Two of the best times to shoot are the "golden hours" each day—just after sunrise and right before sunset. This is when the Sun casts a natural, gentle glow that's ideal

for photos. Keep in mind the Sun's position in the sky, says Burke. For example, if you want to get a shot of an animal in front of a landscape, you should have the Sun to your back so the light is shining on your subject.

Try different angles

Decide what you do and don't want to see inside the frame of your shot, says Burke. When you're about to take a photo, look through the viewfinder of your camera or on the screen of your phone. Turn your camera a little to the right, then to the left.



Frame your shot.

Observe how this changes the shot and whether one side looks better. Vary your angles. Point your camera toward the ground or up to the sky to capture those vantage points as well.

Keep experimenting

The best way to become a stronger photographer is to practice, says Burke. If you'd like to learn technical skills, consider taking a photography class. Ask an adult to help you check with local art centers or look for an online course, such as one at [outschool.com](https://www.outschool.com) or [khanacademy.org](https://www.khanacademy.org). You may also decide to enter our Nature Photo Contest! Get to know the photographers helping to judge the contest (at right) and see the entry form on the next page.

Meet the judges

Jesse Burke

He likes to document humans' relationship with nature, including life on his farm with his three daughters. See his work at jesseburke.com.



Angela Ledyard

She became interested in photography while watching her grandparents take photos. Now she finds inspiration in landscapes and more. See her work at angelaledyard.com.



Ami Vitale

She works as a photographer, filmmaker, and writer and is considered one of the most influential conservation photographers today. See her work at amivitale.com.



GETTY IMAGES (2); JESSE BURKE; ANGELA LEDYARD; AMI VITALE



Contest

Enter our Nature Photo Contest!



The winning images from last year's contest

Do you love taking photographs of plants, flowers, trees, and wildlife? When you're outdoors, are you often trying to capture the amazing beauty of the natural world? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's* fourth annual Nature Photo Contest.

How to enter

- **Consider the judging criteria.** Submissions will be judged on quality (clear, well-composed photographs that aren't blurry), originality (the use of creativity and imagination through the camera lens), and how well they reflect the nature theme and *The Week Junior*.
- **Choose one photo to enter.** Only one photograph per entrant is allowed.
- **Fill out an entry form.** With an adult, complete an entry form and submit it by July 29, 2024.
- **Enter the correct age group category.** Children ages 8 to 10 will be judged in one category. Children ages 11 to 14 will be judged in another category. Winners will be selected from each category. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2024PhotoContest-8-10. The entry form for 11- to 14-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2024PhotoContest-11-14.

NO PURCHASE OR SUBSCRIPTION NECESSARY. Open to legal residents of the US, DC, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, 8–14 years. Professional artists are not eligible. Ends 11:59:59 p.m. ET 7/29/2024. Void where prohibited. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules. Sponsor: Future US LLC.

The judges

The Nature Photo Contest will be judged by Editor-in-Chief Andrea Barbalich, Creative Director Dean Abatemarco, and Photo Editors Nataki Hewling and Lily Alt. The entries will also be judged by three award-winning professional photographers: Jesse Burke, Angela Ledyard, and Ami Vitale.

The prize

The winning entries may be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Week Junior*.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
The word "solstice" comes from the Latin words sol ("Sun") and stitium ("to stand still").

Mark the summer solstice

This astronomical event is a great opportunity to welcome the new season.

The day with the most hours of sunlight in the northern hemisphere (the half of our planet that lies above the equator) is called the summer solstice, and it marks the official start of summer. This year, it occurs on Thursday, June 20. Many people around the world celebrate the solstice because it ushers in a season of longer days with more natural light to enjoy and to help plants grow. Here's how to get started with your own celebration.

Understand the science

The Earth is constantly rotating as it orbits around the Sun in space. The summer solstice is the time of year when the Earth is tilted most toward the Sun. On this day, the northern hemisphere gets the most hours of daylight all year. (The winter solstice, in December, has the fewest hours of daylight.)

Know the history

It's believed that people started celebrating the summer solstice as far back as the Stone Age. In ancient times, celebrations included bonfires and ritual dances that were thought to grant extra power to the Sun, which would make for a better growing season and ward off evil spirits. Today, though, most celebrations focus on the joy of the summer season.



Enjoy longer days.

Borrow a tradition

In Sweden, the summer solstice is celebrated with a national holiday called Midsummer. People gather at parks or country homes, wear crowns made of flowers, and dance around a tall pole called a maypole. The flower crowns, and the holiday itself, symbolize the start of a new season. You could borrow from this tradition and head outside for a picnic with your family to celebrate. Bring along traditional Midsummer

foods like salmon, potatoes, and strawberries, as well as supplies to make floral crowns for everyone. Many towns and cities in the US—such as Fairbanks, Alaska; Austin, Texas; and New York City—also host Midsummer or solstice festivals.

Soak up the sunshine

A big part of celebrating the summer solstice is spending more time outside to take advantage of the extra hours of daylight. You and your family could enjoy one of your favorite outdoor activities, whether that's hiking, heading to the beach, bike riding, or gardening. You could also consider some outdoor crafts to celebrate the day, such as decorating your front sidewalk or driveway with chalk suns, rainbows, and flowers.

World celebrations



Here is how three other countries mark the longest day of the year.

Mexico

On the solstice, visitors head to the pyramids of Chichén Itzá (above) on Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. The Sun casts shadows on the main pyramid, making it appear evenly divided in darkness and light.

Russia

The Ivan Kupala festival takes place shortly after the solstice to mark the end of winter. Plants are burned to ensure a good summer harvest.

United Kingdom

A ring of giant rocks constructed in about 2500 BCE perfectly frames the rising Sun during the summer solstice at Stonehenge, where thousands gather to watch.



How to...

FUN FACT
The earliest written mention of tofu in America was in a letter by Benjamin Franklin in 1770.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Cook up crispy tofu nuggets

Ingredients

- 16-ounce package extra-firm, pressed tofu
- 1 cup brine (juice) from a jar of dill pickles
- ¼ cup panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup crushed French fried onions
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- Ketchup, mustard, or other dipping sauce

Instructions

1. Tear the tofu into bite-size nuggets and place in a bowl. Pour the pickle juice over the tofu and allow to marinate for 30 to 60 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, combine the breadcrumbs, onions, cornstarch, and paprika in a bowl and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Drain the tofu and add it to the breadcrumb mixture, tossing to coat well.
3. Coat the bottom of a large, nonstick skillet with vegetable oil and set pan over medium-

high heat. When the oil is hot, use a long kitchen utensil such as metal tongs to carefully add the tofu nuggets in a single layer in the pan. Cook until they start to brown on the bottom, about 5 minutes.
4. Continue to cook, using the tongs to occasionally turn the nuggets, until they are golden and crisp on all sides. Remove to a plate lined with paper towels to drain, then serve with your favorite sauce for dipping. Serves 3.



LIFE HACK

GET ALONG BETTER WITH SIBLINGS

Even the closest siblings can get on each other's nerves at times. Disagreements are natural, but they can lead to harsh words and hurt feelings. If you want a more peaceful home life, make an effort to get along better with siblings. The next time you start squabbling, pause and take a breath. Consider your words before you speak. Try not to place blame solely on your sibling, and don't be afraid to take responsibility for your part in a fight. Try doing at least one kind act toward them each day. For example, offer to play a game together, ask how their day went, or tell them you're proud of something they did. Your actions may inspire them to treat you with more kindness too.

Help keep the peace.





How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Anne Hutchinson is credited with forming the first book club in North America, in 1634.

Start your own book club

Summer is a perfect time to enjoy new books with a group of friends.

A book club is a great way to see friends and keep reading over the summer. How it works is pretty simple: Everyone in the club reads the same book, then meets to discuss it. Book clubs are a fun way to hear other perspectives and discover new books you might not have chosen otherwise. Here's how to get started.

Invite members

First, think about the people you would like to be in your club. Consider who would like to read books and talk about them, and invite them to join. Pick a day and time that is convenient for everyone to meet regularly, either once or twice a month. Talk with an adult about who will host and where. You might rotate homes or pick one convenient spot, like a local community center or park.

Establish ground rules

A few basic guidelines will help your book club meetings run smoothly. At your first gathering, discuss what those rules should be. For example, one guideline could be that only one person can speak at a time. Another could be that all opinions about the book should be respected, even when some members don't agree with them.

Choose the books

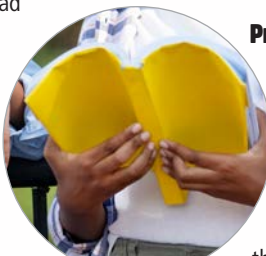
At your first meeting, your club can decide what kind of books you'd like to read. Will you focus on fiction, biographies, graphic novels, or a variety? You can also talk about how your club will choose specific titles. One idea is that members can take turns. To decide who will choose first, second, and so on, you could pick names from a hat or go from youngest member of the group to oldest. For inspiration, see "Find your next read" at right.

Prepare discussion topics

With the other members of your group, prepare a list of topics to discuss at the next meeting, after you've read the book. Some possible questions: What conflicts does the main character face in the book, and how does the author show that? How does the main character change from the beginning to the end?

Add a final touch

Another way to make your book club fun is to take turns bringing a snack that's tied to the theme or the setting of the book. If the book you're reading was turned into a movie, you can also plan a screening with your book club and watch it together!



Discover new books.



Find your next read

If you're looking for a first pick for your book club, take a look at our Summer of Reading list on page 12 as well as these sources.

The Week Junior Book Club
Each month *The Week Junior* chooses a book (such as those shown above) and provides discussion questions and more at theweekjunior.com/bookclub.

Read With Jenna Jr. Jenna Bush Hager, co-host of *Today with Hoda & Jenna* and this issue's guest editor, has released her 2024 book list for kids at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Jenna.

American Library Association
Get the group's list of notable reads for young people at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ALA.

MARK YOUR PLACE

Bookmarks became popular in the 18th century when more people had access to books. They were made of silk or other fine fabrics.



Make a painted paper bookmark

What you need

- Kraft paper or newspaper
- Heavy paper, like cardstock or watercolor paper
- Masking tape
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paint scraper, putty knife, or an old credit card
- Scissors
- Hole punch and ribbon (optional)

Instructions

1. Cover a table with kraft paper, newspaper, or other materials to protect it from getting messy. Tape your cardstock or watercolor paper to the kraft paper or newspaper to keep the paper steady while you paint on it.
2. Squeeze some small blobs or droplets of paint onto the cardstock or watercolor paper. You can use a few colors, if you like, and squeeze the blobs on a few areas of the paper.
3. Hold your paint scraper at the top of the paper, with the edge of it resting on the paper. Push the scraper over the blobs of paint to move the paint around on the paper. You can pull the scraper in straight or curvy lines, squiggles, circles, or an arc, like a rainbow. Experiment with how hard you press the scraper down when you pull. This will change how thick or thin the paint appears. For more or

less blending of the colors, try experimenting with the spacing of the paint blobs.

4. After your design dries, you can add more blobs of paint if you wish. Continue scraping the paint around to layer the paint stripes and shapes. For instance, you can make a plaid design by criss-crossing stripes over one another.
5. After your artwork is complete and dry, you can cut it into strips to make bookmarks for yourself as well as for your friends and family.
6. If you'd like, you can punch a hole at the center top of each bookmark and add a ribbon. Cut a 9-inch piece of ribbon and fold it in half. Push the folded end through the hole. Feed the two cut ends through the resulting loop and pull them to tighten. Trim the ribbon ends at an angle.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

HOLD A BOOK SWAP WITH FRIENDS

At a book swap, you can trade books with friends to read new stories for free. You'll also help the planet by exchanging books instead of discarding them. With an adult's permission, you can host your own book swap. Pick a date and time and a comfortable place, such as your home, a local park, or a community space at the library. Make a guest list and send out invitations, asking everyone to bring between one and five books they're willing to give away. Set up a spot for guests to "check in" books as they arrive. Once everyone has gathered, start swapping. For every book each person has brought, they can take one of their choosing.



Keep books out of landfills.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
More than 20 million people in the US play basketball every year.

Boost your basketball game

Follow these steps to improve your skills in this popular activity.

Basketball is a fun, social sport that can also provide a vigorous workout. Playing the game can improve your balance, coordination, and concentration. For these and other reasons, basketball is a great activity to learn at any age. Whether you're a beginner at dribbling and shooting or you want to improve your game, follow these tips to get started.

Make a plan

All you need to play the game is a basketball and a hoop. If you don't have a hoop, ask an adult to help you find a basketball court at a nearby park or recreation center. If you have friends who want to play basketball, make a plan to meet up regularly to practice together.

Do dribbling drills

Dribbling—continuously bouncing the ball with one hand—is an essential basketball skill. Learning to dribble allows you to move down a court toward the hoop to shoot and score points. Start by focusing on your form—your knees should be shoulder-width apart and your back straight. To get a good grip on the ball, spread your fingers on its top and sides. Practice dribbling while standing in place. As you improve, move on to crossover dribbling, which is when you

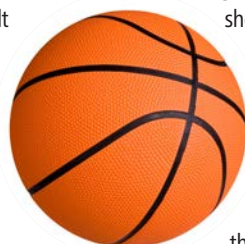
dribble the ball while passing it between your hands. Next try running down the court while dribbling.

Shoot hoops

To practice making a basket, stand close to the hoop with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, and back straight. Hold the ball with both hands close to your chest, with your elbows tucked in. With your eyes focused on the center of the hoop, release the ball aiming for a basket. As you get more confident about shooting from close range, take a few steps back and try to make a basket from farther away. Work your way to shooting from the free-throw line, which is 15 feet from the backboard. Finally, practice your jump shot. Stand in position holding the ball with your knees bent and eyes on the rim, then jump. At the top of your jump, use your hands to launch the ball into the basket.

Practice often

The best way to get better at basketball is to keep playing. Another key to success is to be able to run back and forth on the court during the game. You may want to run laps on the court to help build up your stamina. This will make it easier for you to dribble, shoot hoops, and pass the ball to others while in motion.



History of the sport



Basketball was invented by Dr. James Naismith (above) in December 1891 at what is now Springfield College in Massachusetts. He used two peach baskets for goals, giving the new sport its name. As awareness of the game spread, people at YMCAs and colleges throughout the country began playing it.

The first NCAA men's basketball tournament took place in 1939, and the Basketball Association of America, which would soon become the National Basketball Association, started in the fall of 1946. Basketball has since grown into one of the most popular team sports around the world.



How to...



SPECIAL DELIVERY
In 2001, the first pizza was sent into space and delivered to the International Space Station.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven or a knife.

Make pizzas in cute bear shapes

Ingredients:

- Pizza dough (store-bought or homemade)
- Flour
- Olive oil
- 1 to 2 cups ricotta cheese
- Mozzarella, 8 ounces shredded and 16-ounce block for cheese "snouts"
- Black olives
- Boiled potato (optional)
- Basil (optional)

Instructions

1. Remove dough from fridge and leave it out for at least 30 minutes. (This will make it easier to stretch.)
2. Heat oven to 450° F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or spray with cooking spray.
3. Sprinkle your work surface lightly with flour. Carefully stretch out the dough until it is about ¼-inch thick.
4. To make faces, place a cereal bowl upside down onto the dough. Trace around it with a knife to cut out a circle. Repeat this to create as many faces as you'd like. Place faces on the prepared baking sheet and brush them with olive oil.
5. To make ears, use a cookie cutter or juice glass to cut out smaller circles from the dough. Cut out as many pairs of ears as you have faces. Press the ears onto the faces.
6. Spread ricotta onto the faces and ears, leaving a thin border untopped. Sprinkle shredded mozzarella onto the ricotta.

7. To make eyes, use kitchen shears or a knife to cut the ends off black olives. Place the ends on the faces.
8. To make snouts, use a cookie cutter or knife to cut slices of mozzarella into small circles, about ¼-inch around. Set the cheese snout aside while you bake the pizza. Another option for the snout is to use a slice of a boiled potato, as shown in the photo above, top right. If you use a potato snout, place it on the face before you put the pizza in the oven.
9. Bake pizzas for 10 to 12 minutes until the cheese begins to bubble with a few golden brown spots. While the pizza is baking, use a knife to slice the olives to make the noses.
10. Remove the pizzas from the oven and allow them to cool for a minute or two.
11. Add the cheese snouts and top with olive slices for noses. Serve with a basil garnish. Makes 4 to 8 pizzas.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

KEEP MOSQUITOES AWAY NATURALLY

Mosquitoes and their itchy bites may be a nuisance to humans, but they serve an important role in our ecosystem. For example, some mosquito species pollinate flowers. Birds and bats may also rely on them as food. If you're spending time outdoors, you likely don't want mosquitoes hovering close by. Instead of using chemicals to keep mosquitoes away, which can harm other insects, talk to your family about repelling mosquitoes naturally. Numerous plants, like marigolds, lavender, and rosemary, are known to deter mosquitoes. Setting up an electric fan to use when you're outside can also keep mosquitoes away.



Marigolds help reduce pests.



How to...



WOW!
The world record for the longest movie marathon was more than 121 hours.

Host a movie night

Plan a fun and easy get-together with these helpful tips.

Summer will soon be here, with fewer commitments like homework. So now is a great time to think about planning a movie night. You may enjoy it so much that it becomes a new tradition. Here's how to get started.

Schedule it

Scheduling movie night for a specific day will build excitement. Talk to friends or family about timing that would work best. It could be a one-time-only event, or you could make it a regular activity. You may decide to host a movie night every Friday, for example.

Select a film

Plan to choose which movie to watch ahead of time. If your movie night is on a Friday, ask everyone who will be joining to submit their choice by Wednesday. Review the options together and pick the film the most people agree on.

If movie night will be a regular activity, the decision-making can rotate. Draw names out of a hat to determine the order in which everyone will choose, then write it down. Pick the movie at least one day in advance so you can make sure it's available to stream or rent on

demand. For a few favorites that were suggested by *The Week Junior* readers, see the ideas in the box at right.

Add snacks

Popcorn is a classic movie snack to serve. To make it even more fun, you could set up a popcorn bar and let everyone make their own mix. Set out a large bowl of plain popcorn and several small bowls of toppings on a table or counter. Some topping ideas:

chocolate chips, pretzels, small candies (like Skittles), and seasonings such as garlic powder and sea salt.

Get comfortable

Since this is a special night, it can be fun to pull out sleeping bags, pillows, and blankets for everyone to snuggle up with. You could put an air mattress on the floor for cozy viewing. Don't forget to dim the lights.

Take it outside

If the adults in your home agree, you could move your movie night to your backyard. You'll need a digital projector and a screen or a light-colored bedsheet. You'll be able to see the movie best when it's dark, so wait until about an hour after sunset.



Pop a classic movie snack.

Picks from readers



Ponyo *G (Max, rent on demand)*
This tale (above) follows Sosuke, a boy who befriends a goldfish named Ponyo, who longs to be a girl. Kara, 10, said, "Ponyo and Sosuke will always try to find a way to be with each other."

Freaky Friday *PG (Disney+)*
Tess and her daughter, Anna, wake up one morning to find they've switched bodies. Della, 11, said, "Anna has to deal with her mom's life, and her mom has to deal with hers."

The Sandlot *PG (Disney+)*
Friends get in trouble when one hits a special baseball over a fence. The movie shows how to "stand up to things that scare you," said Liam, 10.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); HAYAO MIYAZAKI/STUDIO GHIBLI



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Blondies get their flavor from brown sugar while brownies get theirs from cocoa.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven or electric mixer.

Bake snickerdoodle blondies

Ingredients

- 12 tablespoons (1.5 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg, plus 1 egg yolk, at room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons cream of tartar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fine salt

For the topping:

- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 teaspoons granulated sugar

Instructions

- Heat oven to 325° F and generously grease the bottom and inner sides of an 8-by-8-inch baking pan.
- Using an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add the egg and egg yolk and mix until thoroughly combined. Mix in the sour cream and vanilla, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl as necessary.
- In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking powder, cream of tartar, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the other bowl slowly, mixing until just combined. Using a spatula, spread the batter into the prepared pan.
- Prepare the topping: In a small bowl, mix together the cinnamon and granulated sugar. Sprinkle the mixture evenly over the top.
- Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until blondies are set. Let them cool completely before slicing. Recipe makes 16 blondies.



LIFE HACK

FEEL BETTER AFTER MAKING A MISTAKE

Even when you try hard to do your best—whether you're playing a game, giving a performance, or taking an exam—sometimes you can still make a mistake. You may feel upset with yourself, but no one can completely avoid mistakes, and everyone makes them. Instead of being hard on yourself, try focusing on what you learned. You can use that information to think about what you will do differently next time. You could also write your feelings in a journal or talk to a trusted family member. You may also want to take a break from thinking about the mistake. You could watch a funny movie, go for a walk, or hang out with a friend. Your mistake will soon feel far in the past.

Going for a walk can help clear your mind.





How to...



FUN FACT
Tomatoes, eggplants, and cucumbers aren't vegetables. They—and other crops with seeds inside them—are fruits.

Grow a vegetable garden

You can enjoy foods you plant yourself with these simple steps.

The warm-weather months are a great time to try gardening. There are many benefits to growing your own fruits and vegetables, including having fresh produce to eat all summer long. Growing your own food also benefits the environment by helping to keep some of the trucks that transport fruits and vegetables off the road. Here is how you can get started.

Choose a space for your garden

With an adult's help, decide where you want to plant. If you have space in a yard, select a spot where the sun shines directly for several hours a day. It should also be an area that drains well. (A good sign is when there are no puddles a few hours after a big rain.) You could also plant a garden in containers. Choose pots made of wood or terra-cotta with drainage holes, then place them in a sunny spot.

Prep the soil

Plants grow best in healthy soil, so take steps to prepare yours for planting. If you're planting in the ground, first loosen the soil, about a foot deep, with your hands or a shovel. Add compost (a mixture of saved food scraps), which will provide nutrients for your plants. Mix it in well. If you're using containers, talk to a nursery about

potting soil or a soil-less mix—both are made for container gardening. Add the mix to each container and fill up to about one to two inches below the rim.

Decide what to plant

Now you're ready to plant seeds according to the packet directions. You can choose what to grow based on what your family likes to eat. One idea is to plant a "salad garden." Ask a garden center about seeds for varieties of lettuce, spinach, and arugula that thrive in heat. Then add other plants that are easy to grow, like carrots, cherry tomatoes, and snap peas.

Water the right amount

How often you water your garden will partly depend on the soil conditions where you live. For example, sandy soil may need watering twice a week, while heavier, clay-based soil may need a dousing just once a week. Container gardens may dry out faster. If the soil feels dry, plan to water at least once a day.

Harvest your garden

Seed packets typically include information about how much time it will take for the produce to be ready to harvest (pick and eat). Lettuce, for example, takes six to 10 weeks to grow. Some vegetable plants—like zucchini and beans—are known for yielding a big bounty, so plan to share any extras with friends and neighbors!



Plant what you love.

Easy kitchen herbs



Herbs—like basil, parsley, and thyme—are simple to grow indoors. Follow these tips.

Select a container. Find a small container, add a potting mix, and plant seeds. Herbs with similar watering needs (read seed packet instructions) can be planted in the same container.

Pick a sunny space. Ask an adult to help you choose an ideal location, like a kitchen windowsill, that gets direct sunlight for several hours a day.

Add water. Herbs may need as little as one inch of water per week (refer to the seed packet for instructions). Most herbs are perennials, so if you take proper care, they will bloom every year!



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Amelia Simmons is credited with introducing cupcakes to the US in her 1796 cookbook, *American Cookery*.

Make candy flower cupcakes

What you'll need

- Kitchen shears or a clean pair of scissors
- Pastel and/or white marshmallows
- Frosted cupcakes, store-bought or homemade
- Spice drops or gumdrops
- Optional: green sour belt candy or strips (for leaves)
- Optional: green sour laces, straws, sticks, or spaghetti and a toothpick (for stems)
- Cup of warm water and paper towels for cleaning candy from scissors

Instructions

Here's how to make the candy flowers in the photo above (from left to right). **Yellow chrysanthemum** To make the petals, snip triangular petals off both ends of a marshmallow. Place a ring of these petals, with the pointed sides facing out and cut sides face up, along the edge of the cupcake. Add another row inside that row. Repeat until the cupcake is covered with petals. (You can make chrysanthemums in more colors, like pink. See finished examples above.) **Classic white daisy** To make the white petals, cut long, thin strips at a slight angle off the tall side of a

few marshmallows. Place a yellow spice drop in the center of a cupcake and surround it with petals, with the narrow end of each strip at the center and the cut sides face down. **Pointy petal orange daisy** For the petals, cut long, thin strips at a slight angle off the tall side of a few marshmallows. Add a spice drop to the center of a cupcake and surround it with petals, with pointier ends facing away from the center and the cut sides face up. **Rounded pink and red daisy** For the petals, cut a marshmallow into thin slices along the short side. Put a

spice drop in the center of a cupcake and surround it with petals, with the cut sides face up. **To add leaves:** Cut leaf shapes from green sour belt candy. Tuck them under the flower petals. **To add a stem:** Use a toothpick to make a hole at the base of a flower. Remove the toothpick and put a short snip of a green sour straw "stem" into the hole. **HELPFUL TIP** Gunky scissors won't make neat cuts. Clean scissors as soon as they get sticky by dipping them in warm water and wiping them dry.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK CREATE A PLANT OR SEED LIBRARY

A plant or seed library is a way to exchange plants or seeds for free. It's also a great way to help support the local ecosystem. For example, growing more wildflowers helps feed more pollinators, like bees and butterflies. With an adult's help, you can set up your own plant or seed library. Invite friends to participate. You will need a bench or stand for everyone to put their plants. You can use a binder with plastic pockets to collect seeds for sharing. Make a sign with basic rules, such as "Leave a plant, take a plant." You can keep your library open through the warm gardening months, then put it away until gardening season next year.



Set up a spot to trade plants.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



FUN FACT

A pair of mourning doves can raise up to six broods a year in warm southern climates.

How to...



Be a friend to wild birds

Find out how you can help turn your neighborhood into a safe habitat.

Wild birds need our help. Nearly 30% of the bird population in North America has disappeared over the past 50 years because of issues like habitat loss, pollution, and climate change. Some of the most affected species include sparrows, warblers, finches, and blackbirds. By making a few simple changes, you can help create a safe haven for birds near your home. Here's how to get started.

Offer materials for nesting. Spring is nesting season, and birds like to pick up natural materials to build their homes. Instead of clearing the materials off your lawn, leave twigs, small sticks, bark strips, pine needles, and leaves where they are so the birds can easily get to them. Be sure to leave only materials birds would find in nature, not synthetic products like acrylic yarn.

Give birds shelter. Build or buy a nest box or birdhouse made of wood. Other materials, like plastic, can get too hot for birds. Aim for a roof that extends over the entrance, to protect birds and their young from rain. Carefully place your birdhouse in a location predators can't reach, such as on a sturdy pole, a tree, or under a house eave.



Home sweet home

Be smart with feeders. If you have a bird feeder, keep the seed dry. As the weather outside gets hot and humid, damp seed can turn moldy and pass toxins to birds, who then spread disease to other birds. To prevent this, fill your feeder no more than halfway so the seed isn't sitting out for long. Also clean your feeder in the dishwasher or with hot water and a bottle brush at least once every two weeks (don't use soap). Let dry before refilling.

Leave insects alone. In the spring and summer breeding months, songbirds rely on insects to feed their young. But many people spray their yard with chemicals that kill insects. Talk to your family about skipping these chemicals (called insecticides) around your home.

Keep windows safe for birds. When a bird looks at a window, it sees a reflection of the sky or trees instead of glass. This is why so many birds mistakenly fly into windows. You can help avoid these collisions by making your home's windows more visible to birds. Talk to your family about whether you could keep bug screens on your windows year-round. With an adult's permission, you can also attach tape strips or decals to windows.

Make a bird feeder



Start with a clean, empty coffee can. Ask an adult to supervise as you follow these steps.

1. Using a can opener, remove the can bottom. With scissors, cut the can's plastic lid in half.
2. Paint the outside of the can as you wish. Let it dry.
3. Place the plastic lid halves on both ends of the can, lining them up with each other. Use hot glue to secure the lids.
4. Cut a piece of string to your desired length, then thread it through the can and knot it.
5. Add seeds to the feeder. Hang it away from where squirrels or other predators can reach.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Everything seasoning is typically made of poppy seeds, toasted sesame seeds, dried garlic, dried onion, and salt.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Bake up tasty everything scones

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 stick cold butter, cubed
- ⅔ cup heavy cream, plus more for brushing
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 to 3 tablespoons everything seasoning mix

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400° F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to combine.
2. Add the cold, cubed butter and pulse about 10 times, until the butter is in pea-sized pieces. Add the heavy cream and egg and pulse until the dough comes together but is still crumbly, about 6 times. You don't want to overwork the dough.
3. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and briefly knead to bring it all together.

Form the dough into a 6-inch disk and use a large knife to slice it into 8 wedges.

4. Arrange the wedges on the prepared baking sheet and transfer to the freezer for about 20 to 30 minutes.
5. Brush the tops of the scones with heavy cream, then sprinkle the everything seasoning over the top (the cream will help the seasoning stick). Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until the scones are puffed and golden. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 8 scones.



LIFE HACK

DO A BIG CLEANOUT OF THE FAMILY CAR

With the weather warming up, spring is a good time to clean the car. Start with the interior. Throw away trash, and remove items that don't belong there, like hoodies or toys. Use a small portable vacuum cleaner to clean dirt or crumbs off the floor. Next, take a damp rag and wipe down the seats and other surfaces. Once you're ready to tackle the exterior, fill a bucket with warm water and add a few squirts of car soap. (Other soaps like dish soap can damage the car's paint.) With a big, soft sponge, scrub down the entire car, especially extra-dirty spots like the tire rims, then rinse with a hose. Finally, use a window cleaner spray and a microfiber cloth to spritz and wipe down windows and lights.

Get your ride shining.





How to...

COLLECT RAINWATER TO REUSE LATER



By Aryn, 12, Texas

At my school in Austin, I noticed that rainwater is collected in barrels to be used later. I thought it was a good idea and decided I wanted to learn more.

When rainwater is collected, it allows people to use less tap water (water that comes from a faucet). This preserves fresh water supplies and saves energy. "If people are using less tap water to keep their landscape healthy, then our processing plants are not using extra energy to keep up with the demand," said Christopher Charles, conservation program director at City of Austin Water. Collecting rainwater in a barrel can save hundreds of gallons of tap water per year. Follow these steps to make this a family or school project.



Start small. Ask an adult at home or school if you can leave watering cans and buckets outside to collect rainwater. Pour the collected water into a covered container until you're ready to use it so it doesn't evaporate.

Think bigger. If you live in a home that has rain gutters on the roof, you can talk to an adult about directing the spouts into larger barrels or buckets. Home improvement stores sell rain barrel kits to help make rainwater collection easier. Be sure to check with your local water department to find out whether your family may need to get a license or permit to have a rain barrel.

Discover the many uses of rainwater. In addition to watering plants, rainwater is useful for washing cars, mopping floors, cleaning outdoor furniture or toys, filling swimming pools, and flushing toilets.

RECONSIDER GRASS LAWNS



By Steven, 11, California

In California, where I live, lawns are responsible for 50% of residential water use. The state is scheduled to vote on a rule that would reduce statewide water use by 14%. To comply, water agencies may give homeowners incentives (payments) to replace grass lawns with drought-tolerant plants, which need little or no water to grow. This is called xeriscaping (zehr-eh-skay-ping). Xeriscapes also require less fertilizer and pest control, which is better for air and water quality.

My family turned to xeriscaping to help the environment and to save water. We replaced our front lawn with decomposed granite (finely graded rock) and succulent plants, which require little water. "By xeriscaping, homeowners' need for watering can come down to a trickle," said Alessandro Ossola, a xeriscaping expert at the University of California, Davis. Consider these additional benefits of xeriscaping.



Families can earn money. In some areas, residents can get rebates (money back) for replacing grass with certain plants. "You can reach out to your local water agency to find out more," said Allison Armstrong of the California Department of Water Resources.

There are many options. Your local nursery can help point out native plants to grow. It can also tell you what non-native, drought-tolerant plants will thrive without harming the ecosystem. For example, my family incorporated agave tequilana, a drought-tolerant plant from Jalisco, Mexico, where my grandparents are from.

It saves time. My family now spends fewer hours maintaining the yard. Ask an adult if you can xeriscape a section of your yard. "If your family likes it, you can discuss doing the rest," said Ossola.

MAKE CHANGES AT HOME TO PROTECT OUR PLANET



By Annika, 9, New Jersey

When I visited India a few months ago, I saw people making many environmentally friendly choices, such as using washable wooden forks and spoons. I wondered what similar things we could do in the US to help our planet. I've learned a few that we can try.

Repurpose toys and unopened gifts. Find a new home for toys and other items you no longer use. You could pass your old toys or games to your younger relatives or neighbors. By finding new owners for your old things, you will be practicing sustainability and helping to avoid adding more waste to landfills.

Be mindful about water. It's important to conserve water, because less than 1% of the world's water is drinkable. "Don't let the water run while you are brushing your teeth and take shorter showers," said Jim Waltman, executive director at the Watershed Institute. If everyone in the US shortened their showers by one minute, we could save 170 billion gallons of water every year.



Order take-out food with less waste. Ask that your food is packed without items you don't need, such as plastic forks and knives or napkins. Be sure to decline condiments, which come in plastic packaging, if you aren't going to use them.

Inspire others. By taking responsibility and changing a few behaviors, you're likely to have a positive impact on the people around you. Ginger Potter, a senior education specialist at the Environmental Protection Agency, said, "When people see you taking action, they will follow."

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LORENA BAYONA



How to...

TAKE ECO-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION



By Aleen, 10, Pennsylvania

My town doesn't have a public transportation system, but we have a lot of visitors.

This results in car traffic during tourist season. When I visit bigger cities—even those that have city buses—I notice there are still many people driving cars. This is a problem because gasoline and diesel cars produce about 30% of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions in the US.

The good news is that everyone can help reduce these emissions if we choose to use

other forms of transportation besides cars. You can talk to your family about ideas for getting around in other ways.

Check out electric and hybrid cars. About 90% of cars in the US use gasoline as their main fuel source. Hybrid cars (powered by a combination of electricity and gas) and electric vehicles can help reduce pollution.

Take available transportation. City buses, trains, ferries, and other types of public transportation help keep cars off the road. Many cities and school districts now use electric buses for some or all of their transportation. This year, five school districts in my home state received money from the US government to purchase electric school buses. You can ask your local officials to look into whether your school district could also receive money for electric buses.

Walk or bike. Ask an adult if you can walk or bike to school or to an activity. You can make the walk or bike ride more interesting by counting the number of birds you see along the way. You could also have a spelling bee with friends by challenging each other to spell out whatever you see along the way, such as "cement" or "caterpillar." Plus, by walking or cycling instead of catching a ride, you'll get physical exercise while you help the Earth!



TURN CARDBOARD BOXES INTO SOMETHING NEW



By Brennan, 12, Montana

When I was 7, I wanted a Nintendo Switch, but my parents said no. I protested by building multiple pretend "Switches" out of cardboard. I had such fun that even after I saved enough money to buy a real Nintendo Switch, I kept building with cardboard. I didn't know it, but when I was reusing cardboard for fun, I was reducing waste. Each year, more than half of the cardboard in the US ends up in landfills. If we reused that cardboard instead, we could save many mature trees each year.

I interviewed Jodi Levine, who creates the crafts that appear in *The Week Junior*. She noted that in addition to preserving Earth's resources, making items from recycled materials flexes your creative muscle. "With a store-bought craft kit, everyone is going to make the same thing," Levine said. "But with recycled materials, everybody will make something different." She shared these crafting ideas with me.

Make cardboard animals. You can get creative with cardboard to make all kinds of creatures. One idea is to turn a couple of boxes into a pretend horse to ride.

Build tiny houses. With an adult's help, cut a cardboard milk carton in half. Use scrap paper and glue to add windows and doors.

Craft a lightsaber. Just attach a toilet paper or paper towel tube to a long skinny balloon, and you have a lightsaber!



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SUSTAINABLE FOOD



By Vivaan, 13, Alabama

By the year 2050, there may be as many as 10 billion people on Earth. But we don't have enough land for

traditional farming to feed the planet's growing population. Fortunately, we already have what may be the perfect food—algae. Algae will be a good food source in the future for several reasons. Here are a few facts to know.

It's efficient and sustainable. Algae crops don't compete with regular food crops, which need fresh water to grow. "Algae can grow in seawater, which otherwise could not be used to grow food," said Zackary Johnson, an associate professor in marine sciences and conservation at Duke University. Algae also grows 10 times faster than traditional crops do.



It's packed with nutrients. Like salmon, olives, and avocados, algae has healthy fats like omega-3s plus other nutrients and minerals that people and animals need. "It's a very attractive source of nutrition for now and into the future," said Johnson.

It won't necessarily taste like algae. Algae does come with one major obstacle: the taste. Some people might even find the idea of eating algae revolting. However, a few years from now, eating algae might not seem disgusting. Scientists at San Diego State University are currently working on methods to enhance the flavor of algae. If someday you find algae on your dinner plate, there is a good chance this sustainable superfood will be tasty.



Make a difference

Junior Council members report on how kids can help the environment.

When the 12 members of *The Week Junior's* Junior Council began meeting for the Spring 2024 session, they decided they wanted to use their voices to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the planet. The children came up with specific ideas, conducted research on the topic, interviewed experts, and wrote their stories. We hope their work inspires you to take action! If you do, write to us about it at hello@theweekjunior.com.

INVESTIGATE NATIVE PLANTS IN YOUR AREA



By Eden, 11,
North Carolina

Native plants are ones that grow naturally in your area. Planting and growing them is a great way for you to help the

environment. Here are three things to know.

Native plants support the ecosystem.

Flowers and other plants that are found locally nourish wildlife, including pollinators like hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees. Because native plants have evolved to adapt to local soil conditions, they don't need chemical fertilizers to survive. Native plants also naturally live longer,

which helps the Earth because

plants help absorb carbon dioxide—a gas that traps heat in the atmosphere and contributes to climate change—from the air.

For example, one native tree can absorb 48 pounds of carbon dioxide each year.

Local experts can help. Visit a garden center in your area for advice on which native plants

might grow best for you. Or join a community garden to learn about native plants. Finally, some libraries have "native seed libraries" and distribute seeds for people to plant.

Native plants can grow nearly anywhere. All you need is a small patch of soil or a gardening pot. If you use a pot, pick a container with large drainage holes at the bottom. Place the plants into the ground or into a container, using potting soil, and follow any directions for watering them. Then get ready for pollinators to pop by!

GET OUTSIDE IN NATURE



By Thomas, 10, California

Going for a walk in nature is good exercise, but did you know it also benefits your brain? "When you walk in a natural environment, like a

park, it allows your mind to wander, giving it a break," said Marc Berman, chair of the department of psychology at the University of Chicago. Consider these facts about the upside of being outdoors.

Even short bursts of time outside can help.

Berman led a study that showed that spending one hour interacting with nature could help people improve their memory and attention span by as much as 20%. When people are at a park or in the woods, their brain doesn't encounter distractions, like traffic, crowds, and noise.

Being outdoors is beneficial year-round.

For many people, getting outside may be more enjoyable in warmer weather. Berman's research found, though, that people still get nature's brain-boosting benefits from an outdoor walk during cold and rainy days. Berman explained that walking in nature is similar to "eating your vegetables or exercising"—it's still good for you even if you don't like doing it at first.

Enjoying nature indoors has positive effects too. No one can be outside all the time, and that's OK. Research shows that people can boost their memory and attention just by looking at photos of nature scenes. Another idea is to bring nature inside by growing houseplants. Berman suggests placing them in areas of your home where you'll see them frequently, like your bedroom or living room.

GATHER ROCKS TO LEARN ABOUT THE EARTH



By Minerva, 10, New York

When I was younger, I would pick up rocks that captured my attention and put them in my pockets. Now I have a large, beautiful collection. One of the best things about rock collecting is that it's easy to get started. "Wherever you walk, there is a rock—and each one has its own story," said Kate Kiseeva, assistant curator at the American Museum of Natural History. Because rocks can be up to 4 billion years old, they can reveal clues to scientists about the age of the Earth and how the Earth's surface has moved around. Kiseeva said that when young people pay attention to the rocks around them, they can better understand the natural world. These suggestions can help you get started with your own rock collection.

Know the rules. Some places, like US national parks, don't allow the removal of rocks. Others, like some state parks, have zoned areas or designated days for collecting rocks. Wherever you visit, be sure to seek out the rules and follow them.

Get advice from experts. If there is a museum near you with a rock collection, plan a visit and don't be afraid to ask questions! Free apps, such as Rock ID, can help you find out more about the rocks you discover.

Become a "rock hound." Anytime you go to a park, beach, or stream, you can look for interesting pieces for your collection. In Central Park in New York City, I found granite that attracts magnets!



ILLUSTRATIONS BY LORENA BAYONA

RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT WILDLIFE



By Hannah, 10, Connecticut

You might think kids don't have much power to protect animals in the wild, but just by learning about human threats to wildlife, you can help. Increased awareness is a reason many animals that were once in danger are now making a comeback, said Danielle Brigida, the senior director of wildlife communications at World Wildlife Fund, which provides support for conservation programs around the globe. "You can make a huge difference," she said. Try one of these ideas to raise awareness of the importance of protecting wildlife.

Host a fundraiser. My friends and I have a bake sale at the end of every school year, and we donate our profits to the World Wildlife Fund. We share facts about endangered species with posters at our table. You could also sell crafts, jewelry, or artwork.

Organize a lunch-and-learn. A lunch-and-learn is when someone talks about a certain subject during lunch. To have a successful lunch-and-learn, you can ask a wildlife expert, such as someone who works at a nature center, to come speak at your school.

Spread the word. Make signs for your sale or lunch with the location, date, and time, and hang them where lots of people will see them.

You can also prepare fact sheets about wildlife to hand out.



DISCOVER THE POWER OF MUSHROOMS



By Aiden, 11, Washington

In the area of the US where I live, the Pacific Northwest, you can find mushrooms nearly anywhere. I love studying and foraging (searching widely) for mushrooms. I even grew a lion's mane mushroom at home. I feel passionate about mushrooms because they are a vital part of our ecosystem. Here's why.

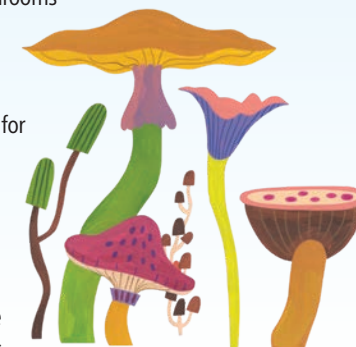
They can help prevent wildfires. Megafires (wildfires that burn more than 100,000 acres of land) have become a bigger problem in the US in recent years. This is partly because our forests are becoming overgrown. The first step is to thin forests by cutting down small trees. Instead of burning those trees, which is expensive and releases carbon dioxide, mycologists (scientists who study mushrooms) are using saprophytic mushrooms, which help dead trees break down. "We grind trees on-site and use the mushrooms to rapidly rot the trees before they become fuel for a fire," said researcher Jeff Ravage, who studies how native fungi can help our forests.

Scientists grow saprophytic mushrooms in a lab for this purpose, then bring them to the forests.

They are important to our ecosystem.

"Mushrooms break down soil, which makes it possible for other plants to grow," said Melany Kahn, author of *Mason Goes Mushrooming*. Without this important contribution, it would be difficult for people to grow fruits and vegetables.

They help us understand nature. You can interact with mushrooms in many ways. You can try mushroom foraging by taking a walk in a park or forest near you. Mushrooms can be tricky to spot at first, but if you find one, there are probably others nearby. Look for them at the base of trees, on forest floors, and in the cracks of sidewalks. When you find a mushroom, you can always touch it—just don't taste or swallow it. If you're interested in learning more, consider participating in activities with mycological societies (groups that organize fairs, classes, and field trips about mushrooms). Visit the North American Mycological Association at NAMA.org to find a society near you.



TRY BEING A FLEXITARIAN



By Nicholas, 11, New York

Many people choose to eat a plant-based diet to keep themselves and the planet healthier. A "flexitarian" diet, which is semi-vegetarian, can have similar benefits and may be easier for some people to follow.

People who choose a flexitarian diet eat mostly plant-based foods, with occasional servings of animal protein—between 9 and 26 ounces of meat or poultry per week. Skipping one portion of meat or poultry a week can help preserve our natural resources. It can decrease

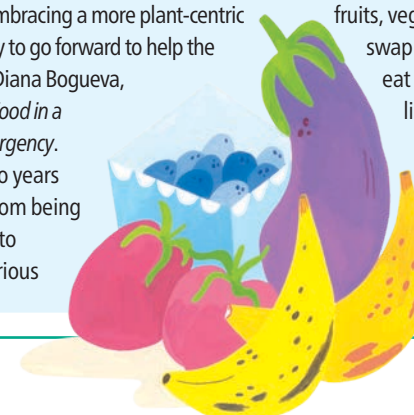
greenhouse gas emissions and conserve water. It also requires less energy to cultivate crops than to produce meat. A paper published in the journal *Science Advances* suggested that shifting to a more plant-based diet could reduce global warming. "Reducing our reliance on animal products, especially red meat and processed meats, and embracing a more plant-centric diet is the way to go forward to help the planet," said Diana Bogueva, co-author of *Food in a Planetary Emergency*.

About two years ago, I went from being a vegetarian to becoming curious

about meat products. I started introducing meat into my diet, which brought more variety to my meals. I also really enjoy having a healthy balance of both meat and plant-based foods.

If you're currently eating both meats and plants, you can try being a flexitarian in a few steps. First, eat more plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Then you could swap out some of the meat and poultry you eat with plant-based sources of protein like beans, chickpeas, and lentils.

Finally, continue to make being flexitarian fun and interesting. Talk to your family about having a different vegetable each week, or take turns trying out new recipes.





DID YOU KNOW?
There are about 3 million teachers in public schools throughout the US.

How to...



Show your teacher you care

Celebrate the amazing educators in your life during Teacher Appreciation Week.

Teachers dedicate a tremendous amount of time and energy to their students. In addition to the hard work of creating lesson plans, assessing progress, and managing a classroom, they do so much more. National Teacher Appreciation Week, taking place May 6–10, is a great time to show your teacher you're thankful for all they do. Here's how you can get started.

Learn the history

Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt persuaded Congress to establish the first National Teacher Day in 1953. In 1985, the National Education Association established Teacher Appreciation Week, to be recognized every year during the first full week of May.

Express your gratitude

One way to show appreciation for your teacher is to write them a letter. (You can fill out the form on the next page and hand it to them!) Take a minute to think about the qualities that make your teacher special. For example, they may be patient at explaining new concepts or they make learning fun. You could include a positive memory of school this year, like a favorite book you read as a class or a fun science experiment led by your teacher.



Tell teachers they're special!

Be a respectful student

Another way to show your teacher how much you appreciate them is to give them your respect. You can do this through your actions. For example, you can demonstrate you care by coming to class prepared and doing your best work. Remember to be polite to your teacher and to everyone else in the classroom. You can also express appreciation by taking an interest in the lesson the teacher is teaching.

Find out what they need

Teachers often pay for classroom supplies with their own money. Talk to your family about how you can support your teacher by providing items they may need, whether it's books for their classroom library or cleaning wipes and tissues. You and an adult could also help organize a spring drive with other families to replenish classroom materials.

Pledge your support

"More than appreciation, teachers need us to take action," the National Education Association states on its website. Teachers need support and resources all year long. With an adult's help, find out more about how your family can support educators at nea.org/TAW#.

3 simple gestures



A touch of nature. Brighten your teacher's workspace with a potted plant or a bouquet of flowers in an upcycled vase. Personalize it with a note in your own words.

A special photo. Capture a fun classroom moment with a camera, then print the photo and frame it for your teacher. Attach a card explaining why this memory is meaningful to you.

A sweet treat. Surprise your teacher with an edible gift, whether it's candy, fresh fruit, or homemade baked goods. Tie on a gift tag with a handwritten note of appreciation.

GETTY IMAGES

Thank you for being my teacher!



Use this form to show an educator your appreciation! Fill it out any way you wish, then give it to your teacher. More forms can be found online at theweekjunior.com/activities.

To: _____

From: _____

You are important to me because:

Three words I would use to describe you are:

A favorite memory I have of you is:

Here is a drawing I made to show my appreciation:



Meet 9 kids who care



The Week Junior teamed up with *The Drew Barrymore Show* to discover children who are making a difference in the world. “We regularly feature ‘Drew Gooders,’ people who are helping others, and we wanted to put a spotlight on some of the young people who are already making a big

impact,” Drew Barrymore told *The Week Junior*. “These kids are making the world a better place, and we are so inspired by them. We can’t wait to see what they do next!” Find out about them here.



Selling lemonade to help animals

Delanie Dennis, age 12, Florida

Rescuing animals is a big part of Delanie Dennis’ life. Among her family’s rescue animals are five dogs, three ferrets, two sugar gliders, two horses, two mini donkeys, and a tortoise. This passion for rescue animals inspired Dennis to start Delanie’s Lemonade Stand outside her parents’ restaurant in 2019. The money Dennis has raised, more than \$100,000 so far, has helped fund 36 different rescues. This year, she set up her stand outside a New York Yankees spring training game at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, Florida. Dennis raised awareness and money for her cause and also got to throw out the game’s first pitch. “It was unreal,” she told *The Week Junior* about the experience. “My pitch was perfectly straight too!”



Sharing the love of reading

Anaik Sachdev, age 11, Arizona

Reading is Anaik Sachdev’s “happy place,” he told *The Week Junior*. His passion for books drove him to launch Loving Library in 2020. He started by collecting used books and donating them to Covid patients in nearby hospitals. Since then, Sachdev has given away about 15,000 books to people in underserved communities. He has established 17 chapters of Loving Library around the world and enlisted 22 other children, including his younger brother, Jovin, to help him collect and distribute books. Inside each donated book, Sachdev places a Loving Library sticker that he designed so the person who opens the book knows that they are loved.



Saving food scraps at school

Parth Gupta, age 12, Missouri

When Parth Gupta was in third grade and noticed how much food was going into the trash during lunch, he was inspired to start a compost program at his elementary school. The initiative began with Gupta and two other students collecting food scraps—and grew until the school’s total trash was reduced by 50%. “That was amazing and kept me going,” Gupta told *The Week Junior*. Today, about 20 students, including Gupta’s younger brother, Sheil, volunteer to collect scraps from every classroom and put them in the school’s new outdoor compost bins. Now in sixth grade, Gupta is planning to start a compost program at his middle school.



Assisting seniors with technology

Jaiden, Keanu, and Milaan Seeliger, ages 14, 14, and 13, California

When the Seeliger brothers began to FaceTime with their great-grandmother after she moved into a nursing home, they realized how important her cell phone was to her. This inspired them to start Tech-Angels, an organization that ensures older people have the technology they need and know how to use it. The brothers have helped more than 300 seniors navigate their devices during sessions they’ve held in elder-care homes. They have also donated 50 used devices to seniors. “We love seeing the smiles on their faces when they learn something new or connect with their family, sometimes for the first time,” Jaiden told *The Week Junior*.



Promoting the power of slime

Alexa Dunsche, age 11, New York

Mixing batches of slime kept Alexa Dunsche busy during the pandemic. She made so much slime, in fact, that she got the idea to sell it at farmers’ markets near her home in Brooklyn, New York, and donate the proceeds to charity. Since starting Brooklyn Slime in 2021, she has sold more than 1,000 jars and raised more than \$5,000 for the nonprofit No Kid Hungry. Dunsche also helps kids discover the benefits of using slime. “I have anxiety, and stretching slime helps me relax,” she told *The Week Junior*. Although she offers slime in different textures and colors, she insists she doesn’t have a favorite. “They’re all my little slime babies,” she said.

COURTESY OF SUBJECTS



Creating crayons for everyone

Bellen Woodard, age 13, Virginia

“The world’s first crayon activist” is how Bellen Woodard describes herself. When she was in third grade, she heard classmates refer to the peach crayon as the “skin color” crayon. But Woodard knew that there are many different shades of skin, so she took action. With help from her mom, she developed and marketed More Than Peach crayons. Woodard’s package of 12 crayons in different shades of “skin color” is now available at Target. She is also writing a book that will be released next year. Woodard told *The Week Junior* that she loves it when children send her letters written with their More Than Peach crayons.



Recycling 400,000+ batteries

Nihal Tammana, age 15, New Jersey

“My friends call me Battery Boy,” Nihal Tammana jokes. In 2019, he started Recycle My Battery, an initiative that has kept more than 400,000 batteries out of landfills. He places recycling bins in schools, libraries, and community centers and recycles the used batteries that people drop off. Because the cost of processing the bins has risen—it is now \$110 to recycle two of them—Tammana works to raise awareness for his cause. Last year, he placed 31,204 batteries in a line, setting a new Guinness World Record. “What keeps me going is the chance to make things better for our planet and future generations,” Tammana said.



WOW!
More than a billion people across the globe take part in Earth Day each year.

Get involved in Earth Day

Participate in a global event by making a difference in your community.

Earth Day is coming up on April 22. The day is a time to focus on the natural world and raise awareness of the major challenges the planet faces. This year's Earth Day theme, "Planet vs. Plastics," is intended to raise awareness of the health risk of plastics and advocate for the rapid phase-out of all single-use plastics. Here are some simple ways you can get involved and encourage others in your community to do the same.

Attend an event

On April 22 and the days before and after, people will gather at Earth Day events. These could include marches or rallies to raise awareness of climate change, educational events that teach new things about the Earth, or cleanups of local natural areas. You can visit earthday.org/earth-day-2024 to find events taking place close to where you live.

Make simple changes

You can help support this year's mission in fighting plastic waste by making some changes at home. For example, you can ask your family to reconsider buying disposable plastic water bottles. If your household

eliminates the use of three plastic water bottles a day, that's 1,095 plastic bottles you'll keep out of landfills per year. You and your family could also commit to putting produce in reusable bags at the grocery store and using washable containers instead of plastic baggies for lunches and leftovers.

Find out how your school is celebrating

Ask leaders at your school whether any events are being planned for Earth Day. You can also contribute ideas for activities. For example, you can suggest a planting day on the grounds of your school and add native plants, which will purify the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. You could also speak with an art teacher about hanging student-created artwork in school hallways to raise awareness about protecting the planet.

Advocate for change

Earth Day is a perfect opportunity to have your voice heard. You can talk to your family or friends about what you plan to do to help the Earth, which might inspire them, too. Make your commitment and share it with us using the form on the next page.



Have a planting day.

What's happening around the world



More than 193 countries, including these three, observe Earth Day.

India Special events will raise awareness of protecting Asian elephants (above). Most Asian elephants live in India, and they are endangered due to habitat loss and illegal hunting.

Canada A nationwide campaign is focused on reducing pollution. People are being encouraged to walk or ride their bikes instead of taking a car on Earth Day.

France A "Run for the Planet" race will be held near Paris, France. Race profits will be donated to the eco-friendly charity of each participant's choice.

GETTY IMAGES



How I'll help the Earth

Use this form to organize your thoughts about ways you and others can protect the planet. Then ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Find extra forms at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Earth Day, how will you pledge to help the planet?

What is your hope for the Earth five years from now?

Draw a picture of what taking care of the Earth looks like to you.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending it to us.



How to...

MISO BUTTER RAMEN NOODLES

Ingredients

- 2 (3.5-ounce) packages uncooked ramen noodles, seasoning discarded
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1-inch knob fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 2 tablespoons miso paste
- ½ cup frozen peas, thawed
- ½ cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 large carrot, peeled and shredded
- 2 scallions, sliced (for garnish)
- Cilantro leaves (for garnish)
- Sesame seeds (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Add the noodles and cook for 2 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the noodle water.
2. Melt butter in a large skillet. Add the grated garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute. Add the miso paste and ½ cup noodle water and continue to cook until the miso is dissolved and the sauce has slightly thickened, about 3 minutes.
3. Add the ramen noodles, peas, corn, and carrots and cook until heated through, about 2 minutes more. If the mixture becomes too sticky, you can add more noodle water, about 1 tablespoon at a time, to loosen.
4. Divide the cooked ramen noodles evenly among four bowls and top each with scallions, cilantro, and sesame seeds. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.



FUN FACT
The longest noodle certified by Guinness World Records was more than 10,119 feet long.

BANANA BREAD MUFFINS

Ingredients

- 1¼ cups flour
- ⅔ cup rolled oats
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅓ cup dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- ½ cup walnuts, roughly chopped

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 350° F. Line a muffin tin with paper cupcake liners.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, oats, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and brown sugar.
3. In another bowl, stir together the syrup, butter, eggs, vanilla, and bananas.
4. Add half of the flour mixture to the syrup mixture and stir to combine. Add the remaining flour mixture and stir until smooth. Fold in the walnuts.
5. Fill each baking cup three quarters full with the batter. Bake on the center rack until a toothpick inserted into the center of one of the muffins comes out clean, about 16 to 18 minutes.
6. Let cool before serving, and store leftover muffins in an airtight container for up to 2 days. Makes 12 muffins.



JOY HOWARD



How to...

SWEET TREAT
According to a YouGov survey, the most popular ice cream flavor in the US is vanilla, followed by chocolate.

BROWNIE SUNDAE CUPCAKES

Ingredients

- 12 brownie bites
- 2 pints vanilla ice cream
- ¾ cup hot fudge or chocolate sauce
- Whipped cream (for topping)
- Rainbow nonpareils or sprinkles (for topping)
- 12 maraschino cherries

Instructions

1. Line a muffin pan with 12 liners and place a brownie bite in each. Use a pastry tamper or your hands to evenly press the brownie into the bottom of the pan.
2. Scoop ¼ cup of the ice cream into each well. If you like, use the back of a spoon to spread it in an even layer. Freeze until solid, about 4 hours.
3. To serve, place each cupcake in a dish, then top with hot fudge, whipped cream, sprinkles, and a cherry. Serve immediately. Makes 12 sundae cupcakes.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender, knife, oven, or stovetop for any of these recipes.

COCOA-ALMOND BERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen strawberries
- 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 1½ teaspoons dark cocoa powder
- 1 cup oat milk
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Instructions

1. Combine all the ingredients together in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Divide between 2 cups. Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.





**BONUS
ACTIVITY
SECTION**

How to...

Make fun recipes for spring

From breakfast and lunch to smoothies and snacks, these dishes are delicious and easy to prepare.

BACON PASTA SALAD

Ingredients

- 10 ounces whole-wheat rotini pasta
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- Juice of one lemon
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 small shallot, minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped dill
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 4 slices cooked bacon, roughly chopped
- 3½ cups baby spinach
- 1 heaping cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 avocado, chopped

WOW!
There are more than 500 shapes of pasta, according to the International Pasta Organization.



Instructions

1. Boil pasta according to the package directions. Drain and rinse with cool water. Set aside.
2. In a small bowl, make the dressing. Whisk together the mayonnaise, lemon juice, cider

vinegar, garlic, mustard, shallot, and dill. Slowly whisk in the olive oil in a steady stream, until the dressing is well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

3. In a large bowl, combine pasta, bacon, spinach, tomatoes, and avocado with three quarters of the dressing. Gently toss to coat. Serve with leftover dressing on the side. Serves 6.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender, knife, oven, or stovetop for any of these recipes.

PEACHY PINEAPPLE SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- ¼ cup vanilla yogurt
- ¾ cup frozen peaches
- ¼ cup pineapple
- ½ cup canned coconut milk
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 to 2 teaspoons honey (optional)
- Maraschino cherries (for garnish)
- Toasted coconut (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Combine all the ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Divide between two cups, and garnish each with a cherry and toasted coconut. Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.



How to...

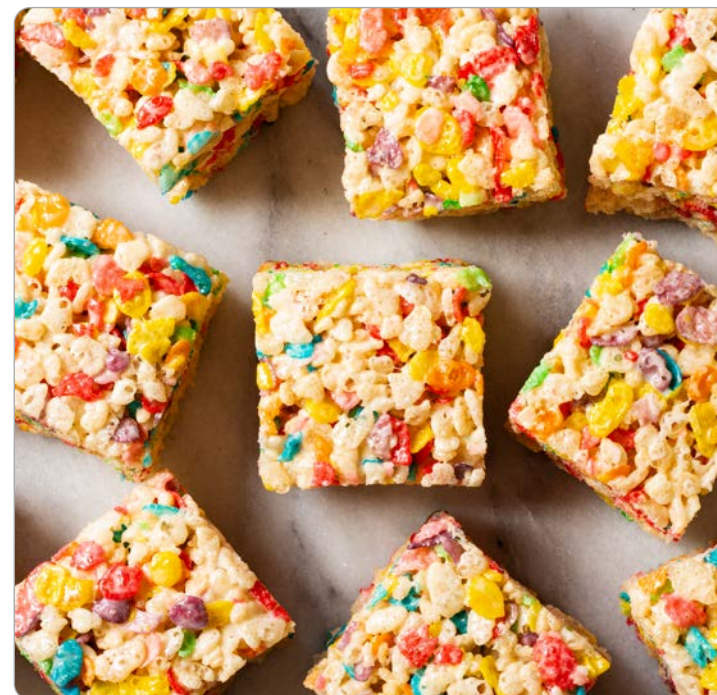
COLORFUL CRISPY TREATS

Ingredients

- 4 cups crisped rice cereal
- 2½ cups fruit-flavored rice or corn cereal
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 6 cups marshmallows (about a 10-ounce bag)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

Instructions

1. Line an 8-inch square baking dish with parchment paper and lightly coat with cooking spray. Combine both cereals in a big bowl.
2. In a large pot over low heat, melt the butter. Add the marshmallows and vanilla, and cook until the marshmallows are melted and smooth, stirring frequently, about 3 minutes.
3. Stir in half of the cereal mixture until it is evenly coated in marshmallow, then add the remaining cereal and stir once more to evenly distribute the melted marshmallow.
4. Lightly press the mixture into the prepared dish. Lay a sheet of parchment on top of the treats to gently smooth the surface, taking care not to press the treats too much. Let cool completely before cutting. Makes about 16 squares.



RAINBOW HAND ROLLS

Ingredients

- ¾ cup uncooked sushi rice
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1¾ teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds
- 4 large sheets nori (dried edible seaweed), halved crosswise
- Half an avocado, sliced
- 1 large orange carrot, cut into thin matchsticks
- 2 Persian cucumbers, seeded and cut into thin matchsticks
- Half a red bell pepper, cut into matchsticks
- Half a yellow bell pepper, cut into matchsticks
- ¾ cup thinly sliced red cabbage
- Soy sauce (for dipping)

Instructions

1. Cook the rice according to the package directions. Meanwhile, pour the vinegar into a large bowl and stir in the sugar and salt until dissolved. Add the cooked rice and sesame seeds and stir to combine evenly. Let the rice cool.
2. Spread 2 to 3 tablespoons of the rice on one end of a nori sheet. Dot bottom corner of the other end with a few grains of rice (you'll use it later to secure the roll).
3. Top the rice with a slice of avocado, followed by ½ each of the carrot, cucumber, red and yellow bell peppers, and cabbage. Roll into a cone, as shown. Serve immediately with soy sauce. Makes 8 rainbow rolls.

DID YOU KNOW?

The origins of sushi date back to about the 4th century BCE in Southeast Asia.





ECLIPSE
EDITION

How to...



BIG EVENT
The National Air and Space Museum will host a solar eclipse festival on the National Mall in Washington, DC, on April 8.

View a stunning sight in the sky

Get set to take part in an exciting and rare celestial event!

On the afternoon of April 8, there will be a total solar eclipse—when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth and blocks the face of the Sun. (Find out about the science of the eclipse in “Rare total solar eclipse arrives” on page 14.) To enjoy this special event, here’s how to get started.

Know where to watch

The eclipse’s path will travel from Mexico to Canada over the US (see the map on the next page). About 32 million people live in “the path of totality” (the parts of the US where people can see the maximum phase of a total solar eclipse, when the Moon completely covers the face of the Sun). Some Americans have plans to travel to be in the path of totality. However, everyone in North America should see at least a partial solar eclipse. With an adult’s help, you can find out if a local astronomy club, observatory, or park is hosting a viewing party. NASA (the US space agency) is also posting a livestream of the eclipse at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2024eclipse.



A total solar eclipse

Protect your eyes

It’s essential to have proper eye protection while watching a total or partial solar eclipse. Without it, the intense light of an eclipse can damage your eyes. Talk to an adult about getting certified solar eclipse glasses (also called viewers) or a handheld solar viewer. If you’re planning to use binoculars, a telescope, or a camera, these items will also require the attachment of special-purpose solar filters. (Don’t use solar viewers in combination with binoculars, telescopes, or cameras.) The American Astronomical Society offers a list of trustworthy suppliers of solar eclipse viewers and solar filters on its site, aas.org. You can also check with your local library. Some libraries are distributing certified solar eclipse viewers to the public for free.

Notice effects of the eclipse

Once the eclipse begins, the Moon will spend about an hour gradually covering the Sun. During these

partial phases of the eclipse, you can watch with your solar viewers. Look at what’s happening all around you. For example, the partial Sun may cast shadows of small crescent suns. About 15 minutes before totality, notice how daylight begins to change—it may look eerie and the sky may darken. If you are located in the path of totality, once the Moon has completely covered the Sun and you can no longer see anything through your solar viewers, you can remove them to look. The Sun’s bright atmosphere will shine a ring around the Moon. People around you may cheer! This totality phase may last about four minutes. As soon as a sliver of Sun reappears, immediately put your viewers back on.

Share your experiences

NASA wants the public’s help to better understand how the eclipse affects wildlife. For example, when the sky darkened, did birds stop chirping? You can share what you observed at eclipsesoundscapes.org. With an adult’s help, you can also send a photo of yourself enjoying the eclipse to hello@theweekjunior.com.



The Week Junior • April 5, 2024



How to...

See the path of the total solar eclipse across the US



Celebrate the eclipse with an out-of-this-world party!

The total solar eclipse—an event that won’t happen again across this much of the US for 20 years—is a great occasion for throwing a celebration! Mindy Thomas, co-host of the popular kids’ podcast *Wow in the World*, has these fun tips to add a “wow” factor to your party.



Decorate your space

Once you’ve picked a time and place—you can celebrate before or after the eclipse—get ready to decorate! String gold and black galactic garlands around the room, and hang cutouts of suns, moons, and stars from the ceiling. Turn sofa cushions into a rocket ship!

Set out celestial snacks

In keeping with the eclipse theme of your party, you can serve sun chips, moon pies,

cosmic cookies, and meat-eor balls (get it?).

Plan games

Pump up the fun with a game of “Pin the Moon on the Sun,” or turn out the lights for a round of flashlight tag. With an adult’s help you could also plan a fun craft, like making eclipse T-shirts using glow-in-the-dark fabric paint.

Add accessories

Get your guests into a festive mood with eclipse-themed party accessories like sun hats, moon masks, and star-shaped sunglasses. (Those sunglasses are for the party only, not for eclipse viewing!)



Make a playlist

Have a dance party with a space-themed playlist including songs like “Moonboots” by Recess Monkey, “Why Does the Sun Shine?” by They Might Be Giants, “Walking on Sunshine” by Katrina and the Waves, and “Space Cadet” by Secret Agent 23 Skidoo.

Get into the eclipse spirit

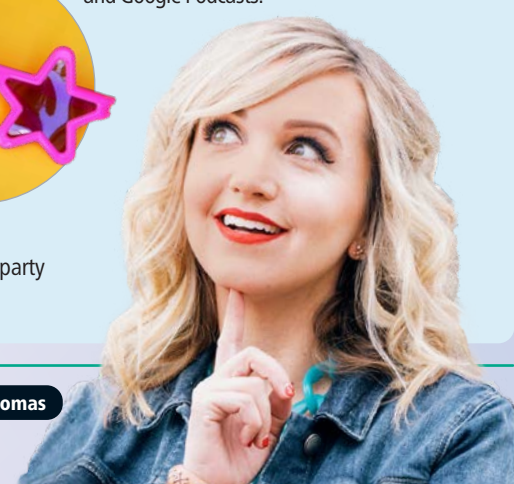
Check out the special *Wow in the World* podcast episode titled “The Great Solar Eclipse Party” starting April 1! It’s available at Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts.



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April 5, 2024 • The Week Junior

Mindy Thomas





How to...



FUN FACT
In the game of pickleball, players are referred to as “picklers.”

Learn to play pickleball

Give this popular and social sport a try with these tips.

Pickleball is a sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong and is played on a court. It’s a simple game for beginners to learn and can be played competitively. It is also the fastest-growing sport in the US. If you’ve wanted to try playing it—or improve your game if you already play—here’s how you can get started.

Get what you need

The only equipment you need for pickleball is a paddle and the Wiffle-like ball that’s used in the game. Pickleball courts are much smaller than tennis courts—20 feet wide by 44 feet long. To find a court to play on, use the Pickleball+ app, or go to the USA Pickleball Association’s court locator website. With an adult’s supervision, you can even use sidewalk chalk to make a court in an empty driveway. Be sure to wear sunscreen and sunglasses or a cap to shield your eyes from the sun.

Understand the game

Pickleball is played by using your paddle to serve the ball over the net to your opponent. It can be played between two opponents, but it’s commonly played

as doubles (a team of two players on each side of the net). It can be played to a point limit, which is typically 11. The side leading by two points wins.

Find a class

First, you can check whether your local recreation department offers youth pickleball classes or find out from your physical education teacher whether pickleball lessons will be taught during gym class in school. You can also ask a

trusted adult if any family or friends play pickleball and can teach you the game. To understand some of the basics, you can watch the video at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Pickleball.

Learn the rules

As you play pickleball, you’ll learn the rules of the game. For example, unlike tennis, in pickleball you’ll serve the ball underhanded. You’ll also find that after being served the ball, you must allow it to bounce on the ground once before hitting it back. You’ll learn new lingo, too, like “the kitchen” (the “no volley” zone on both sides of the net where no hitting the ball is allowed). Finally, to improve your game, practice—and have fun!



Be a pickler!

Court etiquette



Avoid collisions When you’re playing doubles, you don’t want to bump into your teammate. Make a plan to simply yell out “mine” or “yours” to determine who’s going to hit the ball.

Respect other games If you need to chase after a ball that’s ended up on another court, remember to wait for a pause in their game to retrieve it.

Practice good sportsmanship Pickleball can get competitive, but remember that it’s still a game. Keep a positive attitude and if a call is in question, give the point to the opposing side. Finally, when the game is over, meet at the net to tap paddles like experienced players do.



How to...



Create eggs with a marble effect

What you’ll need

- Eggs
- Medium bowl and white vinegar (optional)
- Rimmed baking sheet or shallow baking pan
- Shaving cream
- Spatula
- Food coloring (neon or deep colors work best)
- Skewer or straw (to stir food coloring)
- Paper towels
- Wire cooling rack

Instructions

1. Have an adult help you hard-boil eggs and let them cool. Optional step: Place the hard-boiled eggs in a bowl and pour the vinegar over them. Soak them for about 15 minutes and then dry them off. This will help the egg absorb more dye for brighter colors.
2. Fill the baking pan or sheet with a thick layer of shaving cream (or whipped topping—see “Tips”) and smooth it out with the back of a spatula.
3. Add a few drops of food coloring in one or more colors to one corner. Drag the skewer or straw through the food coloring to make stripes or swirls.
4. Dip the egg into the cream and roll it so it gets fully covered. Try to do this in one motion so the colors don’t blend and get muddy.

5. Set the egg onto a paper towel or wire cooling rack to dry for at least 20 minutes until the cream has completely dried.
6. Use a paper towel to dab off the excess cream. You can add more drops in different colors to another section of the cream on the baking sheet and repeat steps 4 through 6. If you like, you can re-dip a dried dipped egg to add another layer of color.

TIPS

- If you plan on eating the eggs, you can use store-bought whipped topping (like Cool Whip) instead of shaving cream. Store the eggs in the refrigerator.
- To prevent food dye from staining your fingers, wear rubber gloves or use tongs to lift the eggs out of the cream.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

FIND THE REUSABLE STRAW FOR YOU

Reusable straws help the environment because they keep single-use plastic straws out of oceans and landfills. There are several types of reusable straws you and your family can consider when looking for the ones that work for you. For example, silicone straws are durable, soft, and temperature-resistant for both cold and warm drinks, and come in bendy shapes. Bamboo straws are plant-based and biodegradable and will last for many uses. Stainless steel straws are easy to clean and won’t retain the taste of your beverages. Whichever straw you choose, give it a frequent scrubbing with a straw brush to clear it of any drink residue.



Explore your many options.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

A study found that about 63% of Americans have taken a staycation.



Explore your own town

Acting like a tourist in the place where you live can be a fun adventure.

It's easy to get so busy in your daily life that you barely notice the fascinating world where you live. Taking time to get to know your own town or city can help you learn about its heritage and see your surroundings in a new light. With the weather outside warming up, now is a good time to go exploring with a trusted adult. Here's how to get started.

Pretend you're a tourist

Many times, when you live in a place, you never really explore some of the local highlights that a visitor might. Start by asking yourself this question: If I had a friend coming to town who had never been here before, where would I suggest they go? Maybe there's a historic building you can tour, a nice park that you could hike in, or a new ice cream store you've been wanting to try.

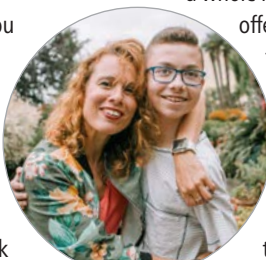
Consider local attractions

Do some research online and talk to an adult about what sights are within a close drive. Again, try to think about where you'd go if you were traveling to your city. A local museum or zoo might have a new exhibit you haven't seen since the last time you visited. If you're more

adventurous, you might head to a state park for a hike or see if there's a zip line course nearby. You can also find out whether any TV shows or movies have been filmed near you and visit the location. Check out sites like movie-locations.com and moviemaps.org.

Seek out a guided tour

With an adult's supervision, look up walking tours for a whole new way to explore your city. Some cities offer walking tours focused on a theme, like food or local parks. (In New York City, for example, there are pizza tours.) You can also search for free self-guided walking tours in your area. Another option: More than 300 US cities have Segway tours, which can be a fun way to explore far and wide.



Spend quality time near home.

Take a photography walk

Another way to see where you live with fresh eyes is to go exploring with your camera. Pick a theme for your photos, whether it's architecture, local waterways, or birds and other wildlife in your area. These things make your city stand apart from the others—and at the end of the day, you can look back on all your adventures close to home.

Virtual vacations



Here are three ways to tour the globe without leaving home.

Travel abroad You can take a virtual walking tour of more than 100 of the world's cities—like London, England (above)—at virtualvacation.us/walk.

Visit a museum See famous paintings like the *Mona Lisa* up close as you virtually visit the Louvre Museum in Paris, France at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Louvre.

Go underwater The Great Barrier Reef, off the coast of Australia, is the world's largest coral reef system. See dolphins, manta rays, and more in the series of videos at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-GreatBarrier.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the blender.



How to...



Whip up a creamy orange smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 large navel orange, peeled and sectioned
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 teaspoons maple syrup
- Orange slices, for serving

Instructions

1. Combine the orange sections, coconut milk, vanilla extract, and syrup with 1 cup of ice in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Divide the drink evenly between 2 glasses, and garnish each with an orange slice. Drink immediately. Makes 2 servings.

FUN FACT

Brazil produces about 30% of the world's oranges—more than any other country.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

BE A FRIEND TO BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies are important to the environment because they are pollinators—they drink nectar from flowers, and in doing so, they collect pollen and spread it from plant to plant. This helps plants, as well as fruits and vegetables, grow. Butterflies' habitats are under threat due to climate change and other human activity. One way to help these vital insects is to grow plants that attract them. Talk to your local garden center about planting a mix of host plants and nectar plants in a garden or in pots. Host plants, like milkweed and parsley, are where butterflies lay their eggs. Nectar plants, like aster and echinacea, are typically wildflowers that butterflies like to feast on.

Wildflowers nourish butterflies.





How to...

FUN FACT

The longest poem in the world is an Indian poem called the Mahābhārata. It is 1.8 million words long.



Write your own poetry

Express your thoughts and feelings in an imaginative style.

Poetry is a creative way to express your ideas and views in words. Many writers enjoy poetry because there are no real rules to writing a poem. Even so, there are some useful guidelines that can help you write poetry. Here's how to get started.

Keep reading

The best way to become a better writer is to be a reader first. Reading poets' work can help you explore what kind of poetry you might like to write. Ask a teacher for recommendations, or visit your local library and ask a librarian to guide you to the poetry section. Some books about poetry to check out include *Swimming Upstream: Middle School Poems* by Kristine O'Connell George, *Honeybee* by Naomi Shihab Nye, and *Soccerverse: Poems About Soccer* by Elizabeth Steinglass.

Pick a subject

When thinking about what to write, you can start by observing what's around you. You could also spend some time thinking about what you love. It can be anything from a sport you're passionate about to a memorable place you've visited. You can also draw

inspiration from ideas and subjects that matter to you, such as animal rescue or protecting the planet.

Consider different types of poetry

Common styles are rhyming, free verse, and haiku. (See more about these types at right.) With rhyming, you can make the first line rhyme with the second, the third line rhyme with the fourth, and so on. With free verse, you can rhyme or not rhyme at all.

Start writing

Keep a small notebook or a note on your device dedicated to jotting down your ideas. Write down anything that strikes you, from colors to smells to sounds. From there, you can start writing your poem. Once you have a draft ready, you can put it away for a day. Then read your poem again and make any edits until you're happy with it.

Share it with someone

After you finish your poem, read it to a family member, a teacher, or even your pet. Saying a poem out loud can bring it to life. (We'd love to read your poem! Have an adult send it to us at hello@theweekjunior.com.)



Find inspiration all around.

3 types of poems



Rhyming A poem that rhymes uses similar sounds in words (for example, "cat" and "sat"). The most common rhyming poem rhymes words at the end of a line of verse.

Free verse doesn't have a typical structure. For example, instead of rhyming, lines of free verse can more closely resemble the rhythms of everyday speech.

Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry. The first and third lines of a haiku have five syllables, and the middle line has seven syllables. (A syllable is a single sound of a word. For instance, "reading" contains two syllables: *read* and *ing*.)



How to...

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.



DID YOU KNOW?

Tom kha is a Thai soup—similar to the one shown—that first appeared in a recipe book in about 1890.

Make chicken soup with coconut and lime

Ingredients

- 8 ounces flat rice noodles
- 1 (13.5-ounce) can coconut milk
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons freshly grated ginger
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 2 stalks lemongrass, halved lengthwise
- Juice of 2 limes, plus a 2-inch strip of zest
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 medium peeled carrot, cut into matchsticks
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach leaves
- Kosher salt
- Handful of cilantro leaves, for serving
- Handful of mint leaves, for serving

Instructions

1. Prepare the rice noodles according to the package directions. Set aside.
2. In a large pot, combine the coconut milk, chicken broth, ginger, fish sauce, lemongrass, and strip of lime zest. Bring to a simmer and let cook 10 minutes. With a big slotted spoon, scoop out and discard the lemongrass and lime zest.
3. Add the bell pepper, carrot, and chicken to the broth and continue to simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and stir in the spinach and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lime juice. Taste and season with salt if needed and add more lime juice if desired.
4. To serve, place a portion of noodles in a bowl. Ladle the soup on top, then garnish with cilantro and mint. Makes 6 servings.



LIFE HACK

CLEAN OUT YOUR BACKPACK

A favorite backpack can get dirty pretty quickly when you use it often. If you haven't given it a deep clean all year, now is a good time. Open it up, empty the contents, and turn the bag upside down outside to shake out any crumbs. Scrub any stains with a stiff brush. Many nylon and canvas backpacks can go in the washing machine (ask an adult first). Wash yours on a weekend, then leave it out to dry. When you repack, organize the inside by grouping similarly sized items together: Put a laptop and notebooks in the largest compartment and pens and pencils in a smaller pocket. Keep your bag neat by going through it at the end of each day and getting rid of things you don't need.



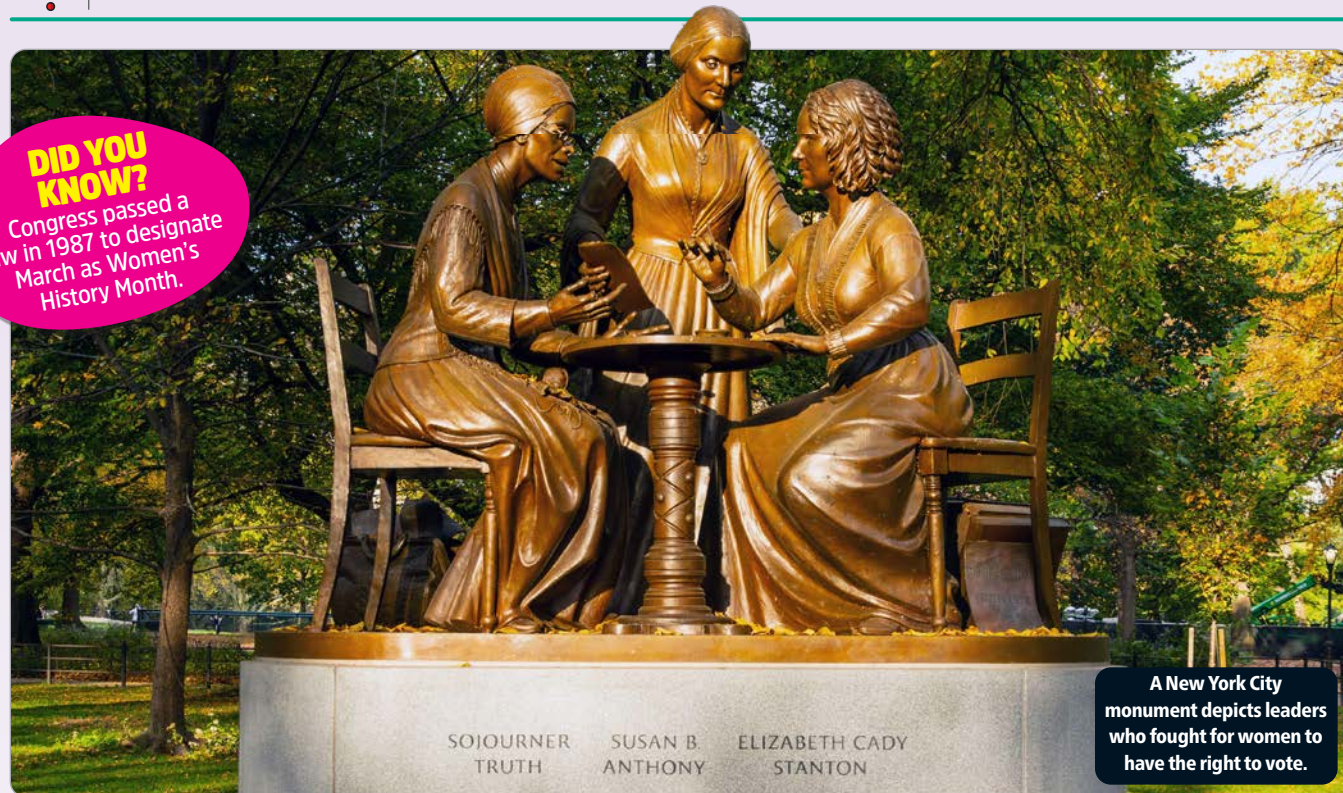
Tidying helps you stay organized.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Congress passed a law in 1987 to designate March as Women's History Month.



SOJOURNER TRUTH SUSAN B. ANTHONY ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

A New York City monument depicts leaders who fought for women to have the right to vote.

Celebrate Women's History Month

Take time to recognize women—past and present—who make a difference.

March is Women's History Month, which celebrates the vital role of women in American history. This month also marks International Women's Day on March 8, in recognition of the issues faced by women around the world. Both events make March a great month to celebrate women who are making a difference. Here's how you can get started.

Understand the issues

The theme of this year's Women's History Month is "women who advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion." Women in the US have made great strides toward equality. (See some of the women who have helped in that fight on this week's cover and on the next page.) However, women still face discrimination. For example, many women earn less money than men do for the same jobs, face obstacles to quality healthcare, and hold fewer leadership positions. Around the world, millions of girls cannot attend school. These issues particularly affect women and girls of color. Meanwhile, research shows that society improves for everyone—not just women—when women's rights are upheld and taken seriously.

Speak up

At times, you may spot discrimination against women or girls in your own community. You can make your voice heard to people in a position of power. For example, students in several states have successfully challenged their schools' dress codes, which often put more restrictions on clothes that are typically worn by girls. If you see unequal treatment of sports

such as better facilities for boys than for girls, you and an adult can speak up to a school administrator. It helps to know your rights. Girls are entitled to equal treatment in education—including in sports—under Title IX, the law passed in 1972 that forbids discrimination at school based on sex.

Plan a special event

Women's History Month is a reason to celebrate! Host an event to spend time with the girls and women in your life. Include boys and men, too! You could watch a film directed by a woman that features strong female characters, like *Barbie*, *Brave*, or *The Secret Life of Bees*. Another idea is to host a women's history trivia night. Make cards with questions and answers, or play with the help of a quiz site like [sporcle.com](https://www.sporcle.com).



Honor special women in your life.

Express gratitude

One of the simplest ways to celebrate women is to tell those you know and admire how much you appreciate them. It could be a family member, friend, coach, or teacher. Make a video, write a note of thanks, or call them to let them know how they've made an impression on you and why you're grateful that they're part of your life.

Find out more

If you'd like to learn more about noteworthy women who broke barriers, explore their stories in words and photos at trusted resources like the National Women's History Museum ([womenshistory.org](https://www.womenshistory.org)) or the Library of Congress ([womenshistorymonth.gov](https://www.womenshistorymonth.gov)).

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Who's who on this week's cover?

In honor of Women's History Month, the cover of this issue of *The Week Junior* features some of the strong female role models who have stood up, spoken out, and succeeded throughout US history. From sports to politics to the arts, they broke barriers and changed the world. This list is only the beginning, however! Who would you add? Tell us at hello@theweekjunior.com.

1 Judy Blume (1938–) Best-selling author who has written more than 24 books and received the Library of Congress Living Legends Award

2 Sacagawea (estimated 1788–1812) Shoshone Indian explorer who guided Lewis and Clark's expedition to survey the West



3 Sandra Day O'Connor (1930–2023) Appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981, the first woman to serve as a justice of the US Supreme Court

4 Oprah Winfrey (1954–) Media executive, philanthropist, and actress who hosted an influential television talk show for 25 years

5 Amelia Earhart (1897–1937) First woman to fly an airplane solo across the Atlantic Ocean

6 Simone Biles (1997–) Gymnast who has won the most international medals in the history of the sport

7 Gloria Steinem (1934–) Feminist and activist who fought for women's rights and co-founded *Ms.* magazine



8 Tina Turner (1939–2023) Songwriter and singer who won multiple Grammy awards and sold more than 150 million records

9 Maya Lin (1959–) Sculptor who created the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC

10 Deb Haaland (1960–) Current head of the US Department of the Interior and the first Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary

11 Michelle Kwan (1980–) Figure skater who won more than 40 championships and is the current US Ambassador to Belize



16 Kamala Harris (1964–) First woman, first Black American, and first South Asian American to be Vice President of the US



12 Octavia Butler (1947–2006) Award-winning author who was one of the first female and Black American science fiction writers

13 Ann E. Dunwoody (1953–) First woman to earn the rank of four-star general in the US Army and the entire US military

14 Helen Keller (1880–1968) Author, pioneering advocate for people with disabilities, and founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union

15 Dolly Parton (1946–) Singer, songwriter, business executive, and founder of Imagination Library, a nonprofit that provides books to children



17 Billie Jean King (1943–) Tennis champion whose activism helped women earn equal prize money in the sport

18 Sonia Sotomayor (1954–) Appointed by President Barack Obama in 2009, the first Latina to serve as a US Supreme Court justice

19 Eleanor Roosevelt (1884–1962) Longest-serving First Lady, who was known for her humanitarian efforts in the US and around the world



20 Anna May Wong (1905–1961) First Chinese American film star in Hollywood, who appeared in more than 60 films

21 Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) Lifelong advocate for equal rights, including women's right to vote

22 Rita Moreno (1931–) First Latina to win the four highest performing arts awards: an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony



23 Althea Gibson (1927–2003) Tennis star who was the first Black American to win a Grand Slam and the nation's first female state athletic commissioner

24 Sally Ride (1951–2012) NASA astronaut and physicist who was the first American woman to fly in space

25 Lucille Ball (1911–1989) Entertainer, business executive, and the first woman to own a major TV studio

26 Juliette Gordon Low (1860–1927) Founder of the Girl Scouts of the USA, the nation's largest organization for girls

27 Sojourner Truth (1797–1883) Former slave who became an author, speaker, and advocate for equal rights, the abolition of slavery, and an end to segregation

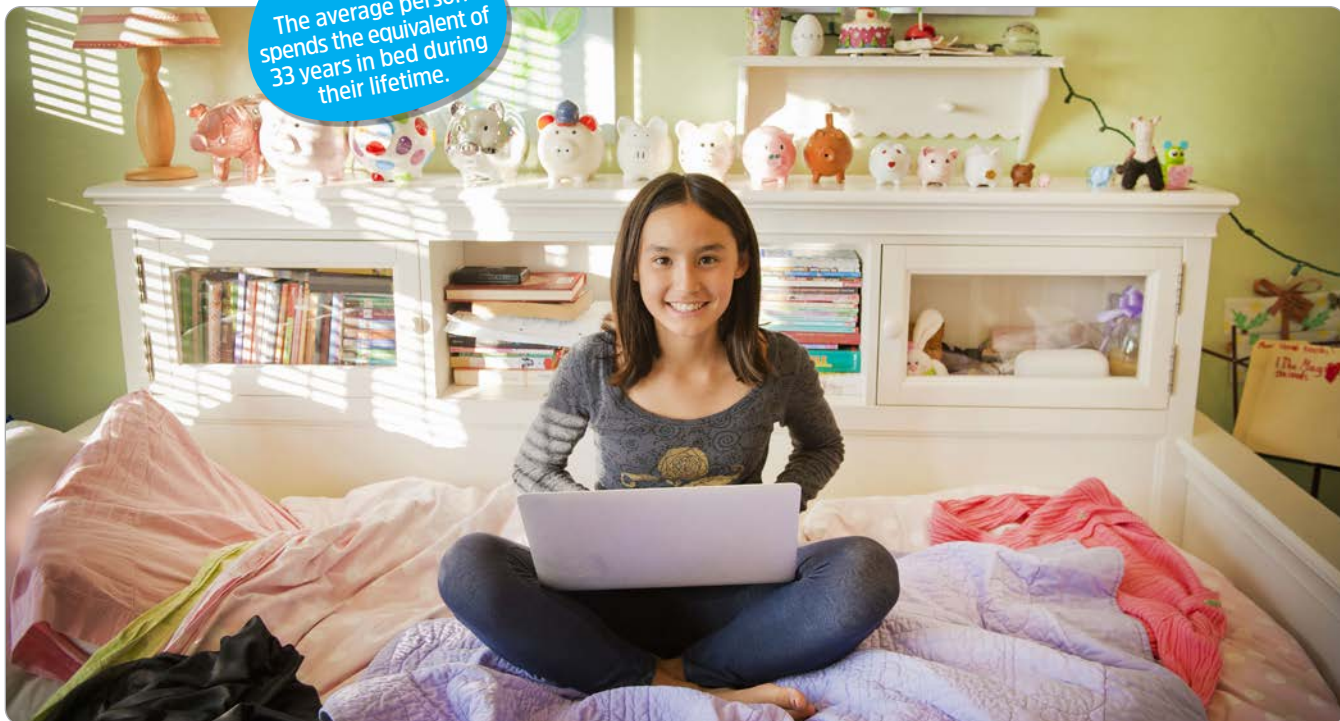




How to...

WOW!

The average person spends the equivalent of 33 years in bed during their lifetime.



Refresh your bedroom

Give your space an update with these simple tips and tricks.

Whether you've outgrown the theme of your bedroom or just want to make a few changes to give it an updated look, you don't need a big budget to make it happen. With a few smart strategies, you can give your room a whole new feel. Here's how you can get started.

Clear out the clutter

Before you start freshening up your space, take a look around to see what you have that you could give away to someone who could use it. Ask an adult for two bags or boxes, one for items you want to donate and one for anything that can go directly in the trash. Once your room is neat, you can see what kinds of changes you might want to make.

Think about light

One simple room update that has a big impact is switching up your lighting. One idea is to hang inexpensive LED string lights on a wall. Or you could try neon wall lights or a retro lava lamp on a nightstand or desk. Moving a lamp from another part of the house to your room, with permission from an adult, can also add soft lighting to your space.

Consider color

Another inexpensive change that can have big results is paint. Ask an adult if they're willing to help you paint an accent wall in your room. An accent wall is a good chance to take a risk with color since it's only one wall. You can choose to paint the wall behind your headboard or even a closet door. If you don't want to paint, you could check out peel-and-stick wallpaper or decals in fun patterns or sayings.



Freshen up with paint.

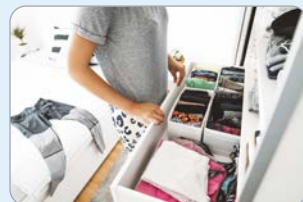
Layer your space

Ask a parent whether your family has extra blankets, throw pillows, or small rugs you could use in your room. They will add new colors, textures, and patterns that will instantly liven up the look and feel of your space.

Add personal touches

Personalize your room with photos of family and friends. You can ask a parent for any spare picture frames or pick some up together at a thrift shop or craft store. Print out photos and frame them for display. You could also frame your own artwork to hang on a wall or prop up on a dresser.

Storage solutions



Baskets You can use baskets in multiple sizes to stash items and keep your freshly updated room tidy. A big basket can hold extra blankets in a corner. Small baskets or boxes inside a drawer can keep items like socks sorted and organized.

Shelves With an adult's help, put up a shelf where you can display a collection. That could be a treasured book series, your assembled Lego creations, or your favorite sports caps.

Underbed storage Specially sized bins that slide under a bed are a great solution for storing your off-season clothes, bulky items (like hoodies and sweaters), and extra shoes.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

In Italian, the word prosciutto translates to "ham."



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Cook up tasty skillet gnocchi with prosciutto

Ingredients

- 1.5 oz. prosciutto (about 3 slices)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- One 16-ounce package potato gnocchi
- ½ cup frozen peas, thawed
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Freshly shaved Parmesan cheese, for serving

Instructions

1. Place a large skillet over medium heat and arrange the prosciutto slices in a single layer. Cook until slices are starting to bubble and shrink, 3 to 4 minutes. Using tongs, flip the slices and cook until brown and crisp, about 3 minutes more. Place prosciutto on a paper towel to cool.
2. Use the same skillet to melt the butter over medium-low heat. (It isn't necessary to wash the skillet before adding new ingredients.) Continue to cook, swirling the pan and stirring the butter until it foams and then starts to brown and smell nutty. Quickly transfer the butter to a bowl to stop the cooking and prevent it from burning.
3. Return skillet to medium heat and add the olive oil. Add the gnocchi and peas and cook, stirring occasionally, until the gnocchi are tender and golden, about 6 minutes.
4. Stir in the browned butter and lemon juice and cook 1 minute more. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
5. Divide gnocchi and peas among 4 dishes and crumble the crispy prosciutto over the top. Sprinkle with shaved Parmesan to serve. Makes 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

REPURPOSE A BROKEN OBJECT

If someone at home accidentally breaks a treasured possession—like a ceramic vase or a favorite coffee mug—see if you can try to fix it instead of throwing it away. (Talk to an adult before you attempt to make any repairs.) If the item can't be repaired for its intended use, consider other ways you might repurpose it instead of sending it to a landfill. For example, a tall vase with a crack in it can be used to hold paintbrushes. Chipped cups or mugs with broken handles can become a place to put pens, makeup brushes, or metal straws. A picture frame with missing glass can be turned into a jewelry holder if you string a few pieces of wire from one side to the other.



Find new uses for a broken item.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

In Greek mythology, Cupid—the unofficial mascot of Valentine's Day—is known as Eros, the god of love.

Show someone you care

Make family and friends feel extra special this Valentine's Day.

Valentine's Day, which takes place on February 14, is a holiday celebrating love, and its origins may date back more than 1,000 years. Today, it's a holiday that honors all types of relationships that bring people joy and happiness. In addition, Random Acts of Kindness Week kicks off on February 11—another reason to make others feel special! Here are some sweet ways to spread love and kindness this year.

Deck out your home

Get your family in a festive mood with holiday decorations. One idea is to cut paper hearts out of construction paper, punch holes in them, and use string to hang them across a mantel or bookcase. Another fun way to decorate is to write messages on paper hearts and put them in unexpected places. Surprise your family with a "Looking good!" heart on the bathroom mirror or an "I love you" heart on a coffee maker.



Make your own valentines.

Start a surprise chain

Here's a fun tradition to try for delighting others. Pack a goody bag or small box with sweets, stickers, colored pencils, or whatever you have on hand. Leave it on the

doorstep of a friend or neighbor without them seeing you. Include a note that encourages them to leave a similar goody bag for someone else.

Make a special plan

One of the best ways to show a friend, parent, or sibling that you care about them is to plan a special outing just for the two of you. For example, you could write a card to your dad inviting him on a hike, or give a card to your best friend suggesting a picnic in the park. You can also do a random act of kindness, like cleaning the clutter out of the family car, packing a surprise snack in a sibling's lunch box, or surprising a grandparent with an unexpected phone call.

Go homemade

There's a reason valentine cards and chocolates are so popular—everyone likes them! Make homemade cards and treats for special people in your life. (Check out our Valentine's globe craft and minty chocolate shake recipe on the opposite page.) On your card, write about how much you appreciate the person, noting a special quality they have or recalling a fun memory you shared.

A holiday's history



Since the 1400s, Valentine's Day has been celebrated on February 14, starting in Rome. The oldest known valentine was written in 1415 in France. Charles, the Duke of Orléans, penned it in the form of a poem to his wife.

It's believed that Americans started making and giving homemade valentine cards as early as the 1700s. The first store-bought cards were likely produced in the 1840s.

Around the same time, a British chocolate company, Cadbury, started selling sweets in special boxes for Valentine's Day. Customers were urged to keep the boxes after the holiday to store mementos, like love notes.



How to...



SYMBOL OF LOVE

About 250 million roses are grown each year just for Valentine's Day.

Make a Valentine's Day globe

What you'll need

- Clean recycled jars with lids
- Craft paint and a paintbrush
- Scissors
- Card stock
- Markers or letter stickers
- Plastic toy animals, artificial flowers, or other figurines
- Ribbon
- White glue or hot glue
- Small corrugated cardboard scraps (optional)
- Gift tags (optional)

Instructions

1. Paint the jar lids. The lids will become the base of your globe. Allow to dry.
2. Cut hearts out of card stock. If you wish, use sticker letters or markers to add a name, initial, or message (like "Love you") to the hearts.
3. Place the hearts into the globe however you'd like. You could simply put a heart, with or without a message, into the jar. Or you could glue the hearts to the animals, flowers, or other objects you're putting in the jar.
4. Add other decorative elements as desired. For example, you could tie ribbons onto your animals to dress them up.
5. If you'd like to raise the items you're displaying in the jar to see them better, use small pieces of corrugated cardboard. Paint them the same color as the lid and let dry. Then stack them in the center of the lid, leaving room to screw it on, and glue them in place.
6. Glue the animals inside the lid (or to the cardboard, if you're using it). If you are using a flower, poke a hole in the cardboard and glue the stem into the hole.
7. Add a tag with a fun saying that relates to your globe—if you're using animals, for example, you could write "I llama be your Valentine," "You are very deer to me," or "For my lovebird."

Whip up a minty chocolate shake

Ingredients

- 1½ cups mint chip ice cream
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup chocolate sandwich cookie pieces, plus a few more pieces for garnish
- 2 tablespoons of chocolate syrup

Instructions

1. Combine the ice cream, milk, and cookie pieces in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. With a spoon, drizzle the insides of two small glasses with chocolate syrup.
3. Carefully pour half of the shake into each glass and garnish with cookie pieces and colorful paper straws for Valentine's Day. Drink immediately. Makes 2 servings.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender.



Serve a sweet treat.



How to...



WOW!
Quarterback Tom Brady is the only player to have won five Super Bowl Most Valuable Player awards.

Host a Super Bowl party

Plan a fun gathering for family and friends to watch the big game.

The football event of the year, the Super Bowl, will take place on February 11 this year, and it's the perfect opportunity to throw a party. Whether you're into watching football or you're just looking forward to the musical entertainment during the halftime show, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Here's how to start planning your party.

Make the guest list

First, talk to an adult about who you'll invite. Do a count of how many people you're expecting, including your family members. Then reach out to guests and let them know when to arrive (check the kickoff time for your time zone). You can make fun paper invites or simply reach out to guests by phone. Encourage everyone to come wearing their favorite team's colors!

Set up the room

Survey the space where you'll be watching the game. Make sure the sofas and chairs are angled toward the TV for a good view. You can add extra seating by placing large pillows on the floor. Decorate the space by hanging team flags and signs, which you can make ahead with markers and recycled construction paper.



Arrange a buffet.

Prep the food

Plan the party menu with an adult. A buffet makes it easy for guests to grab their own food throughout the game. Classic game-day favorites are chicken wings, nachos, and pre-cut vegetables with dips. Impress your guests by making delicious assorted crackers for your party ahead of time (see the recipe on the next page). You can plan a dessert for halftime, like a self-serve sundae bar with candy toppings in team colors. You could also pick up a cookie cutter at a craft store ahead of time to make football-shaped cookies piped with white icing.

Play a game

You can get everyone involved in the fun by playing a game, like Super Bowl Commercial Bingo, while you watch the actual game. Search with an adult online to print out free playing cards for the 2024 Super Bowl commercials. Check the commercials off on your card as they air. Whoever is first to cross out a row of consecutive squares wins! You could also plan to have prizes, like stickers or glow bracelets. During the party, check in with guests to see if they need anything. Most important, have fun!

Football fact file



Lasting legacy The Green Bay Packers won the first Super Bowl in 1967 and the following year. The Super Bowl trophy is named after their legendary coach Vince Lombardi (above, with the ball).

Biggest winners The New England Patriots have the most Super Bowl appearances, with 11. They have won the title six times, tying with the Pittsburgh Steelers for the most wins of any NFL franchise.

Highest score Super Bowl XXIX, between the San Francisco 49ers and the San Diego Chargers, was the highest-scoring Super Bowl in history, with the teams combining for 75 points. San Francisco won, 49–26.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Americans eat 112 million pounds of snacks on Super Bowl Sunday.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove or oven.

Make cracker snacks for game day

Ritz churros

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 6 ounces Ritz crackers (54 crackers)

Instructions

Mix cinnamon and granulated sugar. Set aside. In a big bowl, mix butter, vanilla, and brown sugar. Add crackers; toss. Add cinnamon-sugar mixture. Toss again. Spread crackers on baking sheet. Bake at 300° F until golden, 15 minutes. Makes 4 cups.

Ranch saltines

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons powdered ranch dressing mix
- 8 ounces mini saltine crackers (about 4 cups)
- 1 to 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

Instructions

Combine butter and ranch dressing mix in a large bowl. Add the mini saltine crackers and toss gently to coat. Spread the crackers on a baking sheet in a single layer and bake at 300° F until golden, about 15 minutes. Remove from oven, and sprinkle the saltines with the fresh dill before serving. Makes 4 cups.

Old Bay oyster crackers

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 4 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning, plus more for topping, if desired
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- One 8-ounce box oyster crackers (about 4 cups)

Instructions

Combine butter, Old Bay, and Worcestershire sauce in a large bowl. Add oyster crackers and toss to coat. Spread crackers on a baking sheet in a single layer and bake at 300° F until golden, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle with more Old Bay, if desired. Makes 4 cups.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK CUT DOWN ON PARTY WASTE

With a little planning, you can make your Super Bowl party an environmentally friendly one. First, aim to reduce party waste. Keep paper trash to a minimum and out of landfills by using washable plates and glasses. If you expect you may have leftovers, send guests home with food packed in reusable containers. (You can also ask your guests to bring their own containers.) Keep party decorations simple and try using objects from around your home. A football helmet you already have could be placed on a table or counter, for example. Make sure you clearly label bins for guests to deposit trash or recyclables.

Use washable dishes.





WAKING UP!

New research suggests that hitting the snooze button can help those with drowsiness feel more awake after getting up.



Get a good night's sleep

Increasing the time you spend resting can help you feel happier and healthier.

Most tweens and teens need about nine to 11 hours of sleep every night to be their healthiest and do their best in school. However, most kids this age get much less. There are many reasons, including homework, evening activities, and socializing with friends. Here's how you can get a better night's sleep.

Have a set bedtime

When you go to sleep at the same time every night, your body gets used to the schedule and you fall asleep more easily. To figure out what your bedtime should be, think about when you have to wake up and work backward. If you want to get 10 hours of sleep and have to wake up at 7 a.m., you would need to go to sleep at 9 p.m.

Wind down before bed

Give yourself a full hour to relax before bedtime so your body and mind are ready for sleep. You can split the hour into three 20-minute segments this way: 20 minutes to prepare for the next day (pack your school bag, lay out your clothes, fill your water bottle, and so on), 20 minutes for hygiene (shower and brush your teeth), and 20 minutes to

relax (read a book, draw, or listen to calming music). Make sure your sleep space is comfortable, whether that means slipping into a made bed or curling up under your favorite blanket.

Avoid sleep stealers

Things you eat, drink, and do during the day can also affect your sleep schedule. Try to avoid food and beverages with caffeine (tea, coffee, chocolate) in the afternoon and evening, and don't eat a heavy snack close to bedtime. Exercise can help you feel more tired, but working out within a couple of hours before bedtime can make it hard for you to wind down. Try not to send messages, scroll through your phone, watch YouTube, or play video games right before bed because the light from screens can trick your body into thinking it's daytime.

Be patient

It can take two weeks—or even longer—for your new sleep routine to work. If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes of lying in bed, it's OK to get up and do something else for a while, like sitting in a comfortable chair to read, until you feel more tired.



A regular routine is key.

Why it's important



More sleep can help you be your best self. First, studies show that getting enough sleep helps improve your mood and even makes you happier.

Sleep can also help keep you from getting sick. As you sleep, your body produces cytokines, a type of protein that helps your body fight illnesses. Without enough sleep—or cytokines—you could be more likely to get ill and be sick longer.

Another benefit of sleep: It helps make you stronger, both mentally and physically. More sleep has been shown to help improve your memory, and it makes you stronger by giving your muscles and mind time to grow and recover.



DID YOU KNOW?

Yukon gold potatoes were named after the Yukon River that flows through Canada and Alaska.



WARNING! Ask for an adult's permission before using a knife, the stove, or a blender.

Ladle up a bowl of loaded potato soup

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 small leeks, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 3 pounds Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and diced
- ½ cup heavy cream
- Bacon, cooked and chopped
- Sliced scallions
- Shredded cheddar

Instructions

1. Melt olive oil and butter in a large pot. Add the leeks, celery, and garlic, and sauté over high heat until softened, about 3 minutes.
2. Stir in bay leaves, salt, and pepper. Pour in the broth and bring to a boil. Add the potatoes and cook until tender, about 12 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat.
3. With an adult's help, and working in batches, ladle the soup into a blender and puree until smooth.
4. Return the pureed soup to the pot and stir in the cream. Warm until heated through.
5. To serve, ladle the soup into bowls and top with bacon, scallions, and cheddar. Makes 6 servings.



LIFE HACK MAKE UP WITH A FRIEND

Even close friends can disagree or get on each other's nerves. You may even have an argument or a misunderstanding that hurts your feelings or theirs. If you want to work things out with your friend, wait until you feel calm enough to talk. Then reach out. Ask to speak face to face—conflicts are better resolved offline. To keep from sounding accusatory, try "I" statements, like "I felt hurt when you made fun of my taste in music. Can we talk about it?" Give your friend a turn to speak without interrupting. Repeat what they say to show you're listening. Then apologize for any role you played in the fight. It may take time for things to feel normal again, but a good friend is worth it.



Talk things out in person.



How to...



WOW!

The record for the longest karaoke marathon by an individual is 101 hours, 59 minutes, and 15 seconds.



Have a karaoke night

You can have a great time singing your favorite tunes with friends or family.

Karaoke is an entertaining hobby in which people take turns singing along to popular songs. Planning a karaoke night with family or friends can be a fun option for showing off your vocal skills, spending time together, and enjoying some of your favorite songs in a new way. Here's how to get started.

Get set up

To sing karaoke, you need a way to play the background music to songs and view the lyrics to sing. If you have a karaoke machine, or can borrow one from a friend, it will include a microphone, speakers, and access to a catalog of songs. Another easy, free option: Use YouTube. With an adult's permission and help, go to YouTube on either your smart TV or a tablet connected to speakers. Search the song you want to sing with the words "karaoke version" to find videos that display the lyrics so you can sing along. Grab a microphone (or whatever substitute you have around, like a hairbrush) to sing into.

Consider a theme

There are endless options for songs to sing. One way to narrow them down is to choose a theme, which

could be anything from 2000s pop music to Taylor Swift to Disney songs. You and your friends or family can share ideas and vote on a theme. (If you can't settle on one theme, you can always do more.)

Make a song list

Once everyone is ready, you can begin making a list of the songs you're going to sing. (See "Plan a Playlist" at right.) Start with a few that you can all join in on together to warm up. Then let each person have a turn singing a song before moving on to second or third performances. If you're using a karaoke machine, you may be able to set your playlist ahead of time. On YouTube, you can use the "save" feature to create a playlist. Or you can always write down the songs in order on paper.

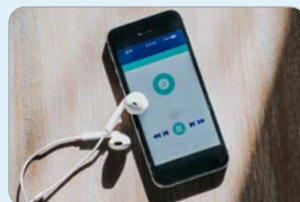
Sing your heart out

When your song comes on, relax and have fun. Instead of focusing on hitting every note, try to keep up with the beat. Once you get more comfortable, you can add moves. If you know a dance that goes with your song, go ahead and try it—or just sway to the music. Karaoke is all about having fun, so do what comes naturally.



Get ready to have a blast!

Plan a playlist



What makes a good karaoke song? Experts say it's a tune you can sing with emotion. If you're with friends, you can pick songs you've all listened to many times and know the words to, which will get everyone to join in for the chorus. (Think about well-known hits like "Let It Go" or "Blank Space.")

If you're doing family karaoke, work in songs that all generations are likely to be familiar with and have easy lyrics to follow (like "Dancing Queen" or "Country Roads"). You can also work in duets (a song sung by two people)—they're good choices for anyone who might not want to step up to the mic on their own.



How to...

FUN FACT

The oldest pizzeria in the world, Antica Pizzeria Port'Alba, in Naples, Italy, started as a pizza stand in 1738.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, oven, stove, or mixer.

Make pizza dip with garlic knots

Ingredients

Pizza dip

- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 cup pizza sauce (from a can or jar)
- Mini pepperoni (optional)
- Fresh basil (optional)

Garlic knots

- One 13.8-ounce package refrigerated pizza dough (such as Pillsbury brand)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

Instructions

1. Pizza dip: Preheat oven to 425° F. Using a stand mixer if you have one (or a spoon), mix the cream cheese, 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese, ½ cup of the Parmesan cheese, and the Italian seasoning until well combined. Spread the mixture into a small baking dish or an oven-safe skillet.
2. Spoon pizza sauce over the cheese mixture, then top with ½ cup each of shredded mozzarella and Parmesan. Top with pepperoni slices, if desired.
3. Bake the pizza dip until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 20 minutes. (Also prepare garlic knots to bake alongside the dip.)
4. Remove skillet from the oven and top with fresh basil leaves, if desired.
5. Garlic knots: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Unroll the dough and slice into 16 strips (about 6"x1" in size). Tie each in a knot and arrange on the prepared baking sheet. Bake about 15 minutes or until puffed and golden.
6. While the knots bake, melt the butter in a small pot over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and turn heat down to low. Stir continuously for 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in salt and ground pepper, if desired.
7. With a pastry brush or a teaspoon, cover warm dough knots with the garlic butter. Sprinkle with Parmesan and minced basil, if desired. Dip garlic knots into the pizza dip and enjoy. Serves 8.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

RECHARGE AND RECYCLE BATTERIES

From remote controls to toys and flashlights, batteries produce the power we need to keep devices going. It's important to make the most of batteries and dispose of them properly to save energy and avoid pollution. To help with this in your home, talk to an adult in your family about buying and using rechargeable batteries. These can be used again and again. You'll buy fewer batteries and won't need to throw as many away. When batteries do run out, recycle them. Each state has different rules about recycling batteries. To learn more about the rules in your area, go to tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Batteries.

Resist throwing away batteries.





How to...

Share your dream for America

Be inspired by the words and example of the visionary leader we remember on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

On January 15 this year, the US will observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The federal holiday honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a preacher and community leader who devoted his life to achieving racial equality for all people. He was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. When he was growing up, segregation (the unjust separation of Black people from white people) was legal. Black children weren't allowed to attend school with white children. Jobs and houses were denied to Black people, and many restaurants refused to serve them. Black people couldn't sit next to white people on buses and trains or use the same bathrooms.

King studied religion and philosophy in college. He was also an activist (someone who takes action for a cause). In the 1950s and 1960s, he led peaceful protests to end segregation and registered Black people to vote. After a protest against segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, in April 1963, King was arrested and put in jail, where he wrote a famous letter saying, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." In

August 1963, more than 250,000 people joined King at the March on Washington in the US capital to call for the passage of a national civil rights law. The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, making segregation illegal, and King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize that year. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act outlawed racial discrimination in voting. On April 4, 1968, King was standing on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee, when he was shot and killed by a racist white man.

In 1986, the third Monday of January became a national holiday. Martin Luther King Jr. Day is the only US holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage Americans to volunteer to improve their communities. If you'd like to participate, the famous quotes from King below may inspire you. You may have dreams for our nation, as he did. We invite you to use the form at right to write your thoughts. If you'd like to share your form with *The Week Junior*, ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms are at theweekjunior.com/activities.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice."

"A man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is right."

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

"Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a better person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in."

First name

Age

State

What is your dream for the United States and why?

What acts of service can you do to help make your dream a reality?

What do you wish leaders would do to help make your dream come true?

Draw a picture of what your dream for the nation looks like.

By submitting this form to hello@theweekjunior.com, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.



How to...



WOW!

Fairbanks, Alaska, will have 3 hours and 42 minutes of daylight on the shortest day of the year.

Enjoy the winter solstice

Try a new family tradition on December 21, the shortest day of the year.

This year, winter officially begins on December 21, which is the winter solstice. That is the shortest day—and longest night—of the year for people living in the northern hemisphere (the half of the planet that is above the equator, an imaginary line that circles Earth). The winter solstice also means that the days that follow will begin to have more sunlight, which is a great reason to celebrate. Here are some activities to try.

Learn some history

Ancient civilizations likely celebrated the winter solstice to mark the return of longer days and more sunlight. Some monuments related to the solstice that were built thousands of years ago are still standing today. These include Stonehenge in England (a ring of giant rocks that align with the Sun's rays on the winter solstice), Newgrange in Ireland, and Maeshowe in Scotland. You can find books about them at your local library, or ask an adult to help you search for information and photos online.



Plan a warm and cozy treat.

Watch the Sun

December 21 is an ideal day to watch the sunrise or sunset, since you won't have to get up too early or stay up late. The time will be different depending on what part of the country you live in. You can look up the times for your area at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Solstice. Then decide with

your family where to watch. The view will be best from a location that lets you see far into the distance, such as on a hill overlooking a park or at the beach, rather than in a neighborhood, where trees and houses may block the view. Bring warm blankets to sit on.

Decorate a yule tree

Decorating a tree outside with food for birds and animals is a popular winter solstice ritual. Try making garlands out of dried or fresh orange slices to hang on the tree, or create mini bird feeders by covering pinecones with peanut butter and rolling them in bird seed before hanging them.

Have a candlelit feast

Many traditional solstice celebrations are centered on candles as a symbol of brighter days to come. Ask an adult to bring out some candles and light them with you. Then switch off the lights in your house, gather around the table, and enjoy a fun dinner or sipping hot cocoa together.

Set goals

Some people use the winter solstice as a time to reflect on the past year and create goals for next year. Your candlelit feast is a good time to discuss what each family member hopes to accomplish next year. Or you can write down your thoughts and hopes in a journal.

4 rituals from around the world

Find out how other cultures welcome winter.



Dong Zhi

This Chinese celebration translates to "winter arrives." Families enjoy foods like brightly colored rice balls.



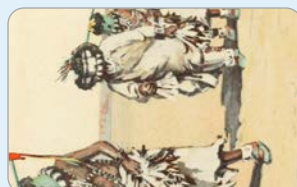
Toji

On December 22, people in Japan light bonfires on Mount Fuji to encourage the Sun's return to nurture crops.



Shab-e Yalda

This Iranian festival means "night of birth." People serve red fruit and nuts to bring good health and prosperity.



Shalako

The Zuni, a Native American tribe in western New Mexico, perform a joyous dance called *shalako* during the winter solstice while wearing intricate masks.



How to...

WRITE A THANK-YOU NOTE

Whether you're thanking a friend for a birthday gift or want to show your appreciation to a teacher or mail carrier, here's how to write a note you can be proud of.

- 1. Start with a greeting.** If you know the person's name, write "Dear ____" (fill in their name). If you're writing to a group of people or an organization, you can start your note with "Hello."
- 2. Be specific.** In your note, be sure to clearly write about why you're thanking the person (or group or organization). You can use phrases like "Thank you for the..." and "I am grateful for..." Then, go into detail about why you're thankful. If someone gave you a gift, add what you love about the gift and how you'll use it. If someone has done something kind for you, tell them how that kindness has helped you.
- 3. Sign your name to end the note.** You can use "Warmly," "Best wishes," or "Sincerely" before you write your signature.



FUN FACT
Americans eat more than 10 billion bowls of soup every year.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven, stove, or blender.

Cook up creamy tomato soup

Ingredients

- 3 pints (about 6 cups) cherry or grape tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup basil leaves
- 4 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup shredded cheddar
- ½ cup heavy cream

Instructions

- Heat oven to 400° F. Spread the tomatoes on a baking sheet and toss with 1 tablespoon oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Roast until wrinkled and browned in spots, about 20 to 25 minutes.
- In a large pot over medium heat, combine the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil with the butter and warm until the butter is melted. Add the onion and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more. Add the tomatoes and their juices, along with the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, basil leaves, and broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool slightly.
- Make cheddar crisps. Line a baking sheet with parchment, then arrange the cheese directly on the parchment paper in 1 tablespoon-size mounds, spacing them 2 inches apart. Bake until no longer bubbly but not browned, about 10 minutes. Let cool.
- Carefully puree the soup in a blender or by using an immersion blender. Stir in the cream. Serve soup with the cheddar crisps on top. Serves 4–6.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK CLEAN OUT A CLUTTERED ROOM

You might have more stuff than you actually use in a bedroom, basement, or play area. You can declutter your space and help the environment by recycling or donating items. You'll keep them out of landfills and could help someone in need. With your family's assistance, pick a room to clean out, then divide the room into zones to tackle. These could include a closet, a dresser, shelves, or under a bed. Working on one area at a time, sort items into boxes labeled "trash/recycle," "donate," and "keep." After you've thrown away or recycled what can't be saved, bring the donation items to a local collection center. Neatly place any "keep" items in drawers or closets.

Make your cleanout a group effort.





FUN FACT

In a survey, 52% of adults said they enjoy eating holiday treats more than they enjoy opening gifts.

How to...

WARNING!

Always ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the oven.



Use cake mix to bake cookies

Ingredients

- 1 box cake mix, such as gingerbread, lemon, red velvet, white, or chocolate
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup mix-ins, such as freeze-dried strawberries, Peppermint Patties, mini Peanut Butter Cups, mini M&M's, cinnamon, chopped Oreos, or white chocolate chips
- Assorted toppings, such as sanding sugar, edible glitter, lemon curd, powdered sugar, snowflake sprinkles, or Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal

Instructions

1. Choose a box cake mix and the mix-ins and toppings that will go with it. See "Choose your cookie combination" (below) for what you will need for the cookies shown.
2. Make a basic cookie dough: Combine the package of cake mix, vegetable oil, and eggs in a large bowl and stir ingredients until smooth.
3. Add up to 1 cup of the mix-in you plan to use. The batter should be thick. If it's too thin to hold its shape, add up to ½ cup all-purpose flour to thicken.
4. Refrigerate cookie dough for 30 minutes, then use an ice cream scoop to portion out balls of dough, arranged about 3 inches apart, on parchment-lined baking sheets. Next, follow the instructions below for your chosen cookie combination.
5. Bake at 350°F for 8 to 10 minutes. Makes about 18 cookies. If you like, you can repeat the steps above with another cake mix to make more cookie combinations.

Choose your cookie combination

Gingerbread cake mix

To make **gingerbread snowflake cookies**, roll the cookie dough balls in powdered sugar and snowflake sprinkles before baking.

Another option is **lemon gingerbread cookies**. Press the back of a teaspoon into the cookie after baking to make an indent, then fill each indent with lemon curd.

Lemon cake mix

Create **sparkling lemon cookies** by rolling cookie dough balls in sanding sugar and edible glitter before you put them in the oven.

Or try making **strawberry lemon cookies** by mixing freeze-dried strawberries into the batter before baking. Add more freeze-dried strawberries on top after baking.

Red velvet cake mix

Mix white chocolate chips into the batter to make **white chocolate red velvet cookies**. Before baking, top the cookies with more white chocolate chips.

Make **Oreo red velvet cookies** by adding chopped Oreos to the cookie batter and sprinkling a few additional Oreo cookie pieces on top before you bake them.

White cake mix

Bake **M&M's cookies** by mixing mini M&M's candies into the batter and adding more candies on top of each cookie before baking.

Make **French toast cookies** by mixing 1 teaspoon of cinnamon into the batter, then rolling the cookie dough balls in crushed Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal before baking.

Chocolate cake mix

Make **chocolate peppermint cookies** by mixing chopped Peppermint Patties into the batter. Top cookies with more chopped candies before baking.

For **chocolate peanut butter cookies**, mix chopped mini Peanut Butter Cups into the cookie batter. Before baking, top each cookie with more chopped Peanut Butter Cups.



How to...

RECEIVE A GIFT GRACEFULLY

With the holidays coming up, you may be fortunate enough to get gifts from family or friends. Here are ways to let them know how much you appreciate their thoughtfulness.

1. **Express your thanks.** After you open a gift, say thank you right away and then try to mention something specific you like about what you received. For example, maybe you love the color of the item.
2. **Keep it positive.** If you happen to not care for a gift you received or already have a similar item, try to respond with the spirit of giving in mind. Instead of saying you don't like the gift or don't need it, say, "Wow! What a gift!" or "Thank you so much for thinking of me."
3. **Send a note.** Even if you said thank you in person, it is still polite to follow up with a simple written card. Write a few sentences thanking the gift giver, and include why you like the present you received or how much you appreciate the thought.



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE

DID YOU KNOW?

The Maya people in Mexico were the first to make hot chocolate. They created it with hot chili peppers.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife and the stove.



Make cocoa with marshmallow bears

Ingredients

- Jumbo marshmallows
- Regular marshmallows
- Mini marshmallows
- Junior Mints
- Black nonpareils
- 3 cups whole milk
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 ounce bittersweet chocolate, chopped

Instructions

1. First, make the marshmallow bear toppers. Start by carefully cutting jumbo marshmallows, using either a knife or kitchen scissors, in half crosswise and setting them down with the cut side up. (The cut side will be sticky, so you can add the rest of the decorations directly onto it.)
2. Next, cut regular-size marshmallows in half crosswise and immediately stick half of a marshmallow to each jumbo marshmallow piece, again with the cut side up. Stick Junior Mints on top of the smaller marshmallows for the

noses. Stick two black nonpareils above the nose on each one to make the bear's eyes.

3. Cut mini marshmallows in half crosswise and stick two pieces to each jumbo marshmallow as the bear's ears. Repeat this process to make as many bears as you'd like.
4. Once the toppers are ready, make the hot cocoa. Warm the milk over medium heat until it is just starting to simmer. Whisk in the cocoa powder and sugar until completely dissolved. Add the chocolate and stir until melted.
5. Pour cocoa into mugs and top with a marshmallow polar bear.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK WRAP GIFTS SUSTAINABLY

During the holiday season, most wrapping paper used to wrap presents gets thrown away. This can be harmful to the environment because gift wrap and ribbons end up taking up space in a landfill. However, there are ways you can wrap presents nicely while still being mindful of the environment. One option is to wrap items in brown kraft paper. This paper can be recycled or composted (turned into a mixture that improves soil), which makes it a more environmentally friendly option. You can use string you already have at home to tie packages and add special touches by repurposing holiday decor. Another option is to use gift bags instead of wrapping paper, as bags are more easily reused.

You can use recyclable paper.





How to...

SPECIAL DELIVERIES

Last year, the US Postal Service processed nearly 12 billion pieces of mail—including cards—during the holiday season.



Give back at the holidays

There are many ways to make a difference this time of year.

The holiday season is an ideal time to spread joy by giving to others. Making a card, volunteering, or simply spreading kindness not only lifts other people's spirits but can also make your own holiday season more meaningful. Here are some ways to give back.

Start small

Small gestures, especially during the holidays, can have a larger impact than you might expect. The holiday season can feel lonely or stressful to some people. Simple acts of kindness like stopping to say hi to a neighbor who lives alone, carrying packages for another person, or holding a store door open takes barely any time but can add a bright spot to someone's day.

Show thanks

You may already express your gratitude to parents, other relatives, and friends who give you presents during the holiday season. You can also think about showing your appreciation to others who are important to you or are working to make the holidays special. For example, you could bake treats for the music director at the house of worship where your family attends services. If you play a sport, you could thank a coach with a fun video of season highlights. You could even leave a handmade thank-you card in the mailbox of the home that has your favorite holiday decorations.



Make treats for someone special.

Hold a fundraiser

Another way to give back during the holidays is to support a cause you care about. One idea is to gather items or raise money to donate to a charity. (See some ideas at right.) You could offer to do holiday-related chores for family and neighbors, like wrapping gifts, helping to decorate, or shoveling snow, in exchange for a donation to a good cause. If your family hosts a holiday get-together, you could ask guests to bring an item to donate to a toy drive or food pantry. You and your family could also consider "adopting" a family in need at the holidays. Check with local charities, then buy the items on a family's wish list together.

Volunteer together

Another way to serve others this holiday season is to donate your time to a good cause. Talk to your family about ways you could volunteer together. Your local community center, a senior home, hospitals, and food banks might especially need help. Volunteer opportunities might include creating brown-bagged meals to distribute to people in need, helping out at a holiday party at a senior center, or organizing the shelves of a local food pantry. You might make connections that carry over into the new year, when you can continue to make time to give back.

4 charities that spread cheer

These organizations offer opportunities for you and your family to serve others.

Toys for Tots

Run by the Marine Corps Reserve, this organization collects more than 24 million new toys and games each year to distribute to kids in need. You can find a local drop-off location at toysfortots.org.



Ronald McDonald House

Ronald McDonald House Charities offers housing and assistance to families who have a child who is in the hospital. At the holidays, many of the locations raise extra money to buy special decorations, gifts, food, and more for families. Find a location at rmhc.org.



One Simple Wish

During the holidays, One Simple Wish receives nearly 10,000 requests from kids who are living in foster care. You can visit onesimplewish.org to grant a holiday wish for anything from a winter coat to art supplies to toys.

one simple wish

Meals on Wheels

This organization delivers groceries and special meals for the holidays to senior citizens who need help. You can find a local chapter to donate to at mealsonwheelsamerica.org.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

The largest snowflake on record was found in Montana in 1887. It measured 15 inches wide and 8 inches thick.

Paint giant paper snowflakes

What you need

- Table covering
- Acrylic craft paint (fluid, in a bottle, not in a tube)
- Paper cup
- Large paintbrush
- Large sheets of newspaper
- Scissors

Instructions

1. Cover a work surface with an old tablecloth or extra sheets of newspaper.
2. Water down your paint: Squeeze ½ inch or so of paint into the cup, add an equal amount of water, and mix it together with your brush.
3. Lay down a sheet of newspaper and paint it. (Don't worry if the edges curl up. You will trim that part off later.) Repeat, painting as many sheets as you'd like. Let dry.
4. To make a snowflake: Lay one sheet down the wide way. Trim the sheet of newspaper into a square by folding the top right corner down to the bottom edge and trimming off the excess strip on the left of the paper.
5. With the top right corner of the sheet still folded down, fold the top left corner down to meet the bottom right corner. Then fold down the left side inward, one third of the way, but do not crease yet. Next, fold down the right side without creasing. Adjust both sides until you have folded it evenly in thirds and then crease. Cut off the resulting bottom points.
6. Cut a design into the paper by cutting out squares, triangles, or other shapes on your folded-up paper. Just make sure to always leave some parts of the folded sides intact so your snowflake doesn't fall apart.
7. Unfold to reveal your one-of-a-kind snowflake!



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK SHARE EXPERIENCE GIFTS THIS SEASON

At this time of year, you may be sharing gift ideas with family and friends. One to consider giving or asking for: experience gifts. An experience gift is something the recipient can do, rather than a material item. It could include things like a restaurant gift card, movie or theater tickets, or a season pass to a local attraction like a museum or zoo. These types of gifts are often better for the environment than material items because they don't involve the production and transportation of more stuff, which uses up natural resources and can cause pollution. Experience gifts are also fun—and the perfect way to make holiday memories with the people you love.



The best gift is time together.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Elephants typically need about two hours of sleep a night, the least of any mammal.



Host a cozy sleepover

With a little planning, you can get ready for a night of fun with friends.

With the weather getting chillier, it's a perfect time of year to invite friends over for some indoor fun with a sleepover. A bonus: If your family decorates your home for the holidays, it can be a special time to host friends for the night. Here's what you need to know to get started.

Plan it out

The holiday season can be busy for families, so talk to yours about an ideal night to have friends sleep over. If a weekend won't work, you could consider having a sleepover during your school's holiday break. Ask how many guests you're allowed to have, then reach out to friends to see who is available. If some can't sleep over, ask if they'd like to stay for the earlier part of the night. With an adult's help, decide on a start time, what friends should bring (like sleeping bags and pillows), and what time their families can pick them up in the morning.



Create great memories.

Set the scene

Decide where you and your friends will hang out for the night and where you'll go to sleep. If you have the option, it can be extra special to sleep in a room with holiday lights twinkling late into the night. Or you could put out your own creative holiday or winter touches to help transform your sleepover space into a

winter wonderland. For example, you could hang handmade snowflakes from the ceiling and drape paper garlands in holiday colors. You could also add flickering light with battery-operated flameless candles set out on tabletops.

Have holiday fun

If you like, you can brainstorm a theme for your winter sleepover. You could ask everyone to come dressed in their most festive pajamas, then snuggle up with blankets for a holiday movie night. Serve popcorn with holiday sprinkles mixed in, and sip on hot cocoa. Or ask an adult family member to guide you on a neighborhood walk with your group to check out the decorations. You could also consider playing a game, like winter charades, or have an indoor snowball fight with white pom-poms.

Make breakfast a blast

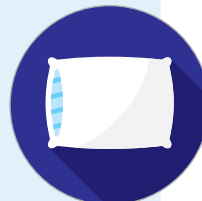
Plan to serve your guests breakfast before they head home. You can jazz up traditional pancakes with a festive touch: Pour batter into greased cookie cutters shaped like snowflakes or ornaments. Or you can arrange three circle pancakes together to create snowmen and put out decorative toppings, like powdered sugar and colorful berries. If you have leftover pizza from the night before, serve it hot or cold as another option for breakfast!

4 tips for sleeping away from home

If you're heading to a sleepover yourself, here's how to feel confident about staying over.

Start slowly

If you haven't stayed away from home before, consider a sleepover at a family member's house where you already feel comfortable.



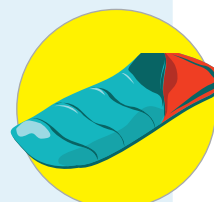
Take comfort items

When you're packing up to go, include an item

that will help you feel more at home. It could be your favorite pillow, a special blanket, a stuffed animal, or a book.

Get settled

Check out your surroundings soon after you arrive. For example, ask where you'll be sleeping and put your stuff there. Check where the closest bathroom is, too, in case you need it during the night.



Ask for help

If you feel homesick, be sure to tell your friend or a trusted adult in

the home how you feel. Missing home and your family are totally normal. Telling someone, or making a quick call home, might help those feelings pass more quickly.



How to...

SWEET TREAT

Traditional bread pudding—a dessert made with stale bread and custard—originated in the UK in the 11th century.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Bake up pecan bread pudding

Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups heavy cream
- One 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- Fine salt
- 14- to 16-ounce loaf day-old brioche, cut into 2-inch cubes
- 2 cups pecan halves
- 6 tablespoons butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- Parchment paper
- Vanilla ice cream (optional)

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, make a custard: Whisk the eggs, heavy cream, condensed milk, vanilla, and a big pinch of salt until well combined. Add the bread cubes and toss to coat. Set mixture aside for 30 minutes to let the bread soak up the custard, stirring occasionally.
2. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Spread pecans on a rimmed baking sheet and lightly toast in the oven, about 5 minutes. Watch the pecans carefully so they don't burn. Remove pecans from oven and let cool for 10 minutes. Chop half of the pecans and stir them into the bread pudding mixture.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, use your hands to mash the softened butter and brown sugar into a paste. Mix the remaining pecan halves into the butter-sugar paste.
4. Line an 8-inch square baking dish with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on all sides. Pour the bread pudding mixture into the prepared pan. Spread the brown sugar pecan topping over the top of the bread pudding. Cover pan loosely with foil and bake 40 minutes.
5. Remove foil and continue to cook until bread pudding is set, about 30 to 40 more minutes. (Stick a knife in the center. If it comes out clean, the pudding is done.) Remove from oven and let cool at least one hour before slicing. Serve with a scoop of vanilla ice cream if desired. Makes 9 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

DECREASE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

When carbon dioxide (CO₂) is released into the atmosphere, it causes temperatures on Earth to rise. Carbon dioxide comes from burning fossil fuels, like oil and gas, to power cars and generate electricity. Your family's "carbon footprint" is the amount of carbon dioxide released into the air because of the energy you use. There are simple ways you can reduce your footprint. For example, if you and your family are running errands close by, you can walk instead of drive. Eat fruits and vegetables that are grown nearby so less fuel is used to transport food from far away. You can also take shorter showers—the less hot water you use, the less energy is needed to heat the water.



Run local errands on foot.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Ready to level up your giving?



FREE!

No in-app ads or purchases

In **Give As We Grow** you will play fun minigames, explore virtual locations and causes, and earn heart points and rewards to transform your game world for the better.

Make it your mission to make a difference!

Set giving goals then track your progress in the app!

Want to spark a meaningful mealtime conversation this holiday season?

Here are some conversation starters from our partner the **National Center for Family Philanthropy**:

- Funniest moment of the year
- Proudest moment of the year
- What is a cause or issue you care about and why?
- What is a local organization you want to support?
- Set a donation budget. Have each family member research and promote their favorite organization. Vote on the winner.

Get more tips like this in the Give As We Grow Resource Library.

GIVING TUESDAY

On **November 28th**, join people around the world in giving back on GivingTuesday. Whether it's making someone smile, helping a neighbor, donating time or money to a cause, or inspiring others to act, we each have something to contribute.

FOR INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, VISIT GIVEASWEGROW.ORG

FREE FOR DOWNLOAD!



A first-of-its-kind, educational mobile app for kids ages 8–11 to spark a new movement in generosity!



1 GAME APP

2 GIVING JOURNAL

3 RESOURCE LIBRARY

SCREEN TIME FAMILIES CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT!

- Grounded in educator-designed curriculum
- Developed using research-backed methods to help kids connect to their emotions and develop relationship skills
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Including 15+ cause areas:

animals
arts & culture
education & literacy
water & sanitation
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How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

In a recent survey, 40% of adults said their most cherished holiday tradition is spending time with family and friends.



Celebrate family traditions

Experience the joy of making long-lasting memories together.

Your family may have special traditions, particularly during this time of year as the holidays approach. Whether making cookies, walking around the neighborhood to enjoy colorful lights, or watching a favorite holiday movie, these traditions can help you feel closer to the people you love. You can enjoy established traditions or create new ones together. Here's how to get started.

Consider current traditions

Think about the traditions your family already has, then write them down. For example, a shared tradition might be going to a favorite ice cream stand on vacation every summer. This time of year, you may have several traditions centered on upcoming holidays. They could include making a cherished family recipe, posing in front of your home every year for a family photo, or getting new matching winter pajamas. Ask older adults in your family what traditions they remember participating in as children. There could be some they might have forgotten but may enjoy reviving.

Brainstorm new ideas

Next, gather the thoughts you and your family may have for brand-new traditions. Add those ideas to your list. For instance, you could discuss making a special once-a-year outing, like going to a nice restaurant or seeing a show. Traditions can also be super simple. For example, on

Thanksgiving Day, you could plan to watch the annual Macy's parade on TV, round up relatives before dinner to play a family game of football, or volunteer at a soup kitchen to serve others. Also consider initiating new food traditions, like creating a waffle bar with everyone's favorite toppings the morning after a big holiday.

Get your relatives on board

Many families have members who love to organize and bring everyone together. Think about who those people are in your family, whether it's a parent, aunt, uncle, or grandparent. They can help you with creating the "guest list" for any special family gathering, picking a date and time, and choosing the setting. They can also help you plan a video call with loved ones who may live far away but still want to share in the fun.

Create a keepsake

Celebrating traditions is a great way to create family memories that last forever. Consider taking photos while you're spending time together. Then you can display one in a frame to remind your family all year long of the fun you had. If you try a new tradition, take time afterward to reflect on it. Did your family enjoy it? Is there anything you would do differently next time? The point of a tradition is to like it so much that you want to do it again. It's also OK to change it in a way that works best for your family.



Pull out old family recipes.



How to...

WOW!

Some pine cones stay on the tree for more than 10 years before opening up to release the seeds inside them.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using hot glue.

Make animal figurines from pine cones

What you need

- Pipe cleaners
- Pine cones
- Scissors
- Colored cardstock paper
- Hot or white glue

Instructions

1. To make arms or legs for all the animals, hold a single pipe cleaner at both ends and pull the center down between the scales so that the middle is buried in the cone. Pull the two ends down and use scissors to trim each end to your desired arm or leg length.
2. To make the lion, add two sets of legs as described above. For the mane, cut a small doughnut shape out of paper and slip it over the top of the pine cone. Cut V shapes all around the outside of your circle to make it look like the fringe of a lion's mane. Glue on a piece of pipe cleaner as a tail, and twist the end.
3. To make the bear, glue a small pine cone to the top of a larger pine cone. Add arms and legs to the bottom cone as described in step one. Cut a small paper circle for a snout and poke a short snip of pipe cleaner through the

- center of the snout to make the nose. Bend the pipe cleaner down and glue the other side to the head. Cut two paper ears and glue each one between the pine cone's scales on both sides of the bear's head.
4. To make the bird, add one set of legs as described in step one. Cut two paper wings (they should look like stretched-out semi-circle shapes) and glue them on both sides of the pine cone. Fold a small paper triangle in half and glue it to the head for a beak. Cut a long, thin triangle for the tail and glue it on the end opposite the head.
5. To make the dog, add two sets of legs as described in step one. Cut two ears out of paper and glue them in between the scales on either side. Make the tail by gluing on a pipe cleaner. Finish the tail by trimming some fluff off the end with scissors.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK USE UP HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS

After a big meal like Thanksgiving dinner, there are often lots of leftovers. It's a good idea to use them up before they spoil, not only to avoid food waste but so they don't end up in landfills—both of which help the environment. When you have a lot of remaining food, you may want to get creative. You can use leftovers to make new dishes, such as a turkey sandwich with cranberry sauce or s'mores layered with pumpkin pie. Challenge your family to see who can come up with the best recipe! Another option is to portion out the leftover food into small containers and freeze them. You can defrost them later and warm them up for quick lunches or easy dinners.



Layer up a turkey sandwich.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

In a study from Stanford University, walking helped people feel more creative by about 60%.



Go on an evening nature walk

Heading outside with your family after dark can reveal a new world around you.

As it starts getting dark earlier, it's a good time to consider going on a walk at dusk (when the sun has just set) with your family. You may be surprised how different your walking route feels—and looks and sounds—at this time of day. Here's how to get started.

Plan your route

Talk to the adults who will be joining you about where to go on your evening walk. Sticking to a familiar route can help you feel comfortable knowing your way around in the dark. You could start your walk when the sun is just setting so your eyes begin to adjust before it's fully dark. You could also plan to take your walk on a night when the Moon is full or nearly full, which helps provide natural light.

Walk together

You'll always want to walk with at least one trusted adult, for guidance and safety. Stay off roads, and stick to pedestrian paths. Make sure you wear layers to be prepared for chilly temperatures. Plan to wear light-colored reflective clothing, including shoes and hats with reflective stripes, so you're easy for drivers to spot.

Let your eyes adjust

You can bring along a flashlight or wear a headlamp if you have one. Although it's important to bring sources of light with you, if the adults you're walking with feel

it's safe to do so, consider waiting to turn on flashlights or have just one person in the group lead the way with a flashlight. This will allow your eyes time to adapt to the dark. You should notice a difference in how well you can see within a few minutes, but it can take up to 20 minutes for your eyes to fully adjust.

Use your senses

Most people tend to rely on their sense of sight. When that's dimmed in the dark, you may notice your other senses are sharper. It tends to be quieter outside at night since there are fewer people and cars. What do you hear? You can listen for any nocturnal animals that might be coming out (such as the creatures at right) or how an evening wind rustles the leaves. Try a listening game: Have everyone stop in a safe spot, close their eyes, and stay quiet for 30 seconds. When the time is up, tell one another what you heard.

Stop and look up

If there is a place on your walk that doesn't have a lot of light pollution, bring along a blanket and take time to sit and stare at the night sky. You can start with the Moon: Where do you see it rising from, and what phase is it in? Is it closer to a full Moon or waning away for a new Moon? You can also look for planets, constellations, and maybe even a passing satellite.



Carry a flashlight.

4 creatures that come out at night

These critters are nocturnal, which means they sleep during the day and are active in the dark.

Moths

Through late fall, you're likely to see moths gathering around porch lights. There are more than 11,000 moth species in the US. How many can you spot?



Owls

You may hear these birds before you see one. Listen for the "hoot hoot"



sound that many species of owls make, as well as a more screeching bird call, which may come from a common barn owl.

Raccoons

These animals can often be seen at night prowling the neighborhood for food. You may spot them because their eyes glow in the dark. Raccoons can be fiercely protective of their territory, so if you see one, stay back.



Bats

To spot bats, carefully watch around lamplights or other dimly lit areas. They typically emerge from tree hollows about 30 minutes after sunset to feed on insects and plants.



How to...

FUN FACT

The first nachos were created in 1940 by Ignacio "Nacho" Anaya, with three ingredients: tortilla chips, cheese, and jalapeño peppers.

TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY

Spending too much time on devices can sometimes make you feel overwhelmed and keep you from other activities you could be enjoying. Here's what to do if you need a break.

1. Set boundaries. If you reach for your device every time you're bored, that might be a sign to take a break. Challenge yourself: See how long you can go without touching it, whether it's two hours or a full day. Then plan to take long breaks every day. You're likely to rediscover other things you enjoy.

2. Give yourself mini breaks. Sometimes you need to be on a device to do homework. To avoid being distracted, take mini breaks: Do 20 minutes of homework, then allow yourself 5 minutes to check messages and another 5 to get up and stretch before resuming work.

3. Delete addictive apps. Certain games or social platforms are addictive. You can delete those apps, even temporarily. Another option is to stop notifications.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the stove and oven.

Bake up sheet pan nachos

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup corn kernels (cut from 1 large cob, or use frozen and thawed)
- 1 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 teaspoon taco seasoning
- 8-to-10-ounce bag tortilla chips
- 8-ounce bag shredded Mexican cheese blend
- ½ cup sour cream
- Zest and juice of ½ lime
- 1 avocado, diced
- ½ cup chopped tomato

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium-high. Add the corn and cook until tender and lightly charred, about 5 minutes. Stir in the black beans and taco seasoning and heat through.
- Spread chips evenly onto a rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle the corn and black bean mixture over the top, then cover with a thick layer of the shredded cheese. Bake until cheese is melted and bubbly, about 5 minutes.
- Meanwhile, mix the sour cream with the lime zest and juice. Using oven mitts, carefully remove nachos from the oven. Top with the avocado, tomato, and lime sour cream. Serve nachos immediately. Makes about 8 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK PREP YOUR HOME FOR THE COLD

As temperatures drop this time of year, it can be tempting to crank up the heat at home. However, using extra heat can waste energy and cause pollution. Before your family raises the thermostat, check your home for drafts. Feel around doors and windows for cold air seeping in—which can also mean warm inside air is getting out. To block drafts, you can place rolled-up blankets in those spots on colder days. You can also talk to an adult about using a smart thermostat, which automatically lowers the temperature when nobody is home. Finally, consider what you're wearing. Putting on a hoodie, socks, and slippers is an easy way to warm up without wasting energy.



Check windows for drafts.



How to...



SMART IDEA
In 1873, Melvil Dewey created the Dewey Decimal System to organize books by topic and numbers. Most libraries still use it today.

Explore your local library

You might be amazed by what you can find in your community.

Libraries are some of the most magical places on Earth. They provide a wealth of knowledge, offer an escape into other worlds, and create opportunities for everyone. If you are new to using libraries, or even if you use the library regularly, you might be surprised to learn how much—beyond supplying amazing books—they can do for you. Here's how to get started.

Get a library card

To take out anything from your local library, you first need a library card, which gives you borrowing privileges to check out books and other items. (Some libraries offer cards in different designs.) The library will have rules about how many items you can borrow and for how long. When it's time to return them, you can bring them back or you may be able to renew them to keep them a little longer. Most libraries have a website to conveniently renew borrowed items online to avoid being charged late fees. At the same time, many libraries are doing away with fines for overdue items. You can visit your local library to apply for a card and ask the librarian about the rules.

Tap librarians' knowledge

If you're stuck trying to find a book and can't remember the exact title or the name of the author, a librarian can likely help you find what you're

looking for. Librarians can also make great suggestions. Tell them what books you have enjoyed—and the ones you haven't—as well as the subjects that interest and inspire you, and they'll be able to recommend your next read. Librarians can also help you do research for a school project or paper by showing you how to do an internet search and find reliable sources of accurate information.

Go beyond books

Libraries are best known for their vast book collections, but they offer even more. You or an adult in your family can also stream movies and TV shows with the help of library apps like Hoopla and Kanopy. Some libraries also lend musical instruments and sheet music. There are computers and quiet zones where you can study with few distractions. You may also find free or discounted printing and photocopying services.

Enjoy scheduled events

Many libraries host free events for young people. You can ask a librarian or check the library's website for a list or calendar of upcoming activities and sign up with your card. These can include tween and teen book clubs, gaming clubs, art workshops, and fun classes like chess, crafting, and coding.



Pick your next favorite book.

4 fun features of libraries worldwide

Check out the surprising things—besides great books—these libraries are famous for.

Bats

The Joanina Library at the University of Coimbra in Portugal is filled with live bats. The bats are welcome to hang—they eat bugs that could damage the library's books.



Karaoke

It must be seen as the ultimate study break! The Tikkurila

Library in Vantaa, Finland, has a soundproof karaoke room with thousands of songs.

Fishing gear

Lots of libraries in New York, including the Honeoye Public Library in Rochester, loan out fishing poles and tackle boxes to beginner anglers.



Dividing line

The Haskell Free Library and Opera House has a thick black line running

down the middle that separates Quebec, Canada, from Vermont. A visitor can stand with a foot on each side of the line and read a book in two countries at the same time.



How to...



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove or oven.



DID YOU KNOW?
Italy is widely considered to have perfected lasagna, the popular layered pasta dish.

Make cheesy veggie lasagna rollups

Ingredients

- Kosher salt
- 12 lasagna noodles
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh sage, plus small leaves for garnish
- One 15-ounce can of butternut squash puree
- ½ cup heavy cream
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the lasagna noodles according to the package directions. With an adult's help, drain them well. Spread noodles on a baking sheet, then pat dry with a paper towel.
2. Melt the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the tablespoon of sage and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in the squash puree and heavy cream and cook until the sauce thickens slightly, about 5 minutes.
3. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Pour ⅔ cup of the squash sauce into a large mixing bowl and stir in the ricotta cheese. Add ¼ cup of the Parmesan cheese, the egg,
- ½ teaspoon salt, and 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese and stir.
5. Preheat oven to 400° F. Pour half of remaining squash sauce into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish.
6. Use the back of a spoon to spread about 2 tablespoons of the ricotta filling on top of each cooked noodle. Carefully roll up each noodle, being sure to keep the filling on the inside, and set it in the baking dish seam-side down. Pour the remaining squash sauce over the top of the rollups and sprinkle with the rest of the mozzarella cheese and Parmesan.
7. Bake until the mozzarella is melted and bubbly, about 25 minutes. Sprinkle with a few sage leaves.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK CONSERVE ELECTRICITY

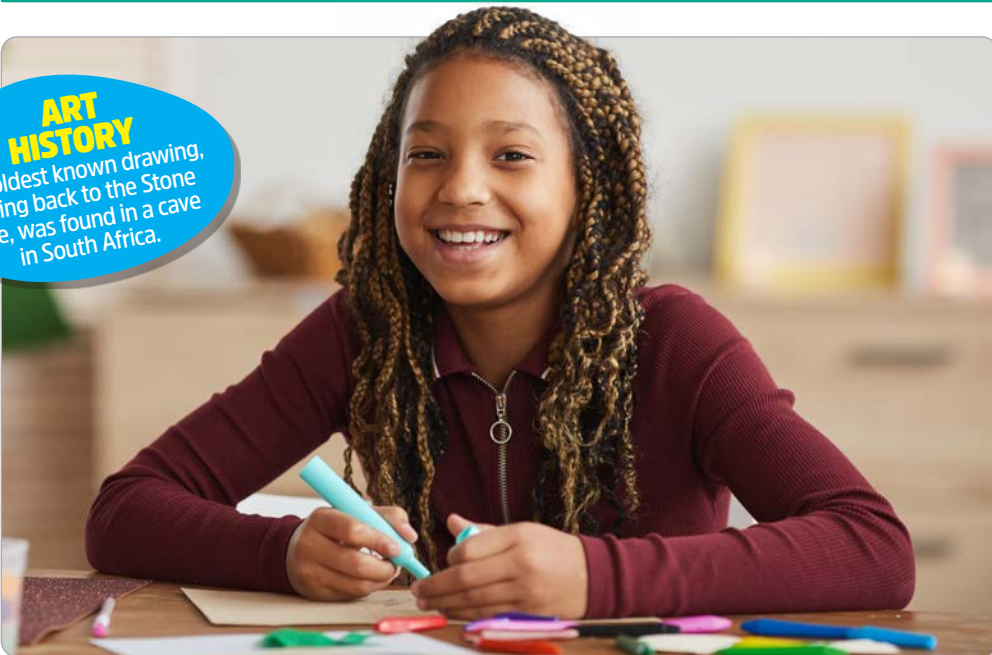
With fewer hours of daylight and more time spent indoors, you may be using more electricity in your home. This could include turning on lights as it gets dark, watching TV, using a computer, charging devices, or heating up food in the microwave. It's important to remember that electricity shouldn't be wasted and doing so can harm the environment. This is because most of our electricity is made using methods that can cause pollution. To help save electricity—and lower your family's electric bill—you can turn off computers, TV, and lights when you're not using them. Unplug devices when they're charged too.



Turn off lights you aren't using.



How to...



ART HISTORY
The oldest known drawing, dating back to the Stone Age, was found in a cave in South Africa.

Improve your drawing skills

A few creative tips can give your art a boost.

Whether you like to doodle in a notebook or sketch on a giant pad, drawing is a great way to express yourself and share your creativity with others. Drawing is also an easy hobby to pursue because you need only simple supplies. Check out these tips to make your drawing skills stronger. And consider demonstrating your talent by entering our Winter Cover Contest! Find out more on the next page.

Gather supplies

One of the best parts about drawing is that you can get started right away with paper and pencils you already have. You might also enjoy drawing in a sketchbook, which is a notebook with special drawing paper. This can help you easily look back at your work and see your progress. You might also want to experiment with other drawing materials, like colored or charcoal pencils, markers, or pastels.

Pick your subject

When thinking about what to draw, choose something you feel excited about capturing on paper. You could draw a beautiful tree or go to a local park and sketch the landscape. Items around your home, like a bowl of fruit or a favorite toy, can also be great subjects. If you can't find exactly what you're looking for, look for inspiration online and print out what you'd like to draw.

Begin with basic shapes

When you start drawing, think of your subject in terms of simple shapes. For example, many animals are made up of a long oval body, a round head, and thin rectangular legs. Drawing these shapes can be easier than trying to draw the animal or object all at once. After you finish the basic shape, you can continue to add more details. When you're done, erase any lines from the original shapes that you no longer need.

Practice often

It takes practice to get really good at drawing. If that's something you aspire to, try to work on it as often as you can. Put a small sketchbook in your backpack so you can draw when you have free time, like when you're waiting for an activity to start. You could even give yourself mini challenges. For example, you can draw the same object for a week and see how much you improve.

Seek out more resources

You can improve your drawing by practicing on your own, but you can also get better with help. Ask a librarian to help you search for step-by-step drawing books at your local or school library. You can also check out tutorials at sites like drawingguides.com and easydrawingguides.com. Museums and art studios in your area may also offer drawing classes. Ask an art teacher at school to point you in the right direction.



Simple tools are all you need.

Meet our drawing contest judges

These awesome illustrators will be judging entries in *The Week Junior's* Winter Cover Contest (see page at right).

Jeff Kinney

The latest book in the best-selling *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series is featured in this issue's Book Club column (p23). Jeff Kinney wrote the books based on his own childhood and was one of the first author-illustrators to make books written in journal format popular.



Sarah Sax



This author-illustrator's graphic novel *Picture Day* features

her signature comic-like style with bright colors and expressive drawings. Sarah Sax is also passionate about teaching kids to harness their creativity. She has worked at a children's museum and helped make educational video games.

Betty C. Tang

For her *Parachute Kids* graphic novel, Betty C. Tang used a format that's similar to an animated movie, drawing on her experience working at Disney TV and Dreamworks Animation. Her comic-style drawings often break out of the traditional square-box format commonly seen in graphic novels.



GETTY IMAGES (2); FILIP WOLAK; ELLE DARCY; COURTESY OF BETTY TANG

Enter our Winter Cover Contest!

How to enter

1. Remove this page and create a cover design. Submissions will be judged on creativity, originality, and how well they reflect the winter theme and the mission of *The Week Junior*. Try to picture your artwork on our cover! Be sure it's in color, and indicate the title of your drawing at the bottom of the page. If you need another form to complete your design, you can print one out at theweekjunior.com/activities.
2. When you're finished, a parent/guardian should go to theweekjunior.com/activities to print, fill out, and sign the consent form. To officially enter, the consent form and a digital image of your artwork should be emailed to covercontest@theweekjunior.com.
3. The deadline to apply is November 8. Finalists will be notified on or about November 17. Full contest rules can be found at theweekjunior.com/covercontestrules.

The judges

The Winter Cover Contest judges are award-winning author/illustrators Jeff Kinney, Sarah Sax, and Betty C. Tang, along with *The Week Junior's* Editor-in-Chief Andrea Barbalich and Creative Director Dean Abatemarco.

The prize

The winning entry will be featured on the front cover of an upcoming issue.

ENTER BY
NOVEMBER
8!

Allow for our cover headline to go here.

Our mailing label will go in the lower left corner, so try not to draw anything too important in this space.

Applicant name: _____ Age: _____ State: _____

Parent/guardian name: _____ Parent/guardian email: _____

Title of drawing: _____



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Halloween is believed to date back more than 2,000 years.

Host a spooky movie night

Get into the spirit of Halloween with a special screening for family or friends.

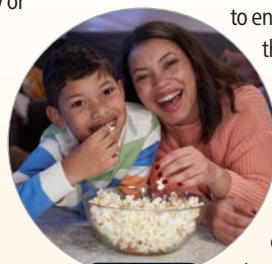
You may already be planning to celebrate Halloween by wearing a costume and going trick-or-treating. Another fun activity to try this season is hosting a spooky movie night for friends or family. Here are some tips for planning a fun event.

Schedule a date

With Halloween happening on October 31, a date between now and then will work for your movie night. Decide whether you want it to be a family event, or talk to an adult about inviting friends. A Friday or Saturday night might be a good option so you can start the movie after dark—making the mood more eerie—and not have to worry about staying up too late on a school night. Once you have a date and time picked out, reach out to anyone you would like to invite.

Pick a movie

You can check out the Halloween-themed movies on your family's streaming services or see what you might be able to borrow for free from the library. Talk to an adult about which movie might be fun and age-appropriate for everyone who is attending. If you want friends to help you choose, you could narrow the selection down to three options and take a quick vote when everyone arrives. (If you're looking for inspiration, see the suggestions at right.)



Decide on snacks.

Serve snacks

Popcorn is a classic movie treat and easy to make for a group. You can serve it plain or set up a popcorn bar. Place one large bowl of popcorn on a counter with several smaller bowls of toppings—like chocolate chips, pretzels, small candies, Halloween-colored sprinkles, garlic powder, and Parmesan cheese. Set out brown paper lunch bags, festive stickers, and black and orange markers so guests can personalize their bags. Then let each friend create their own bag of popcorn and toppings to enjoy during the movie. You could also make the monster treats (at right) in advance!

Get the room ready

Depending on how many people you are hosting, you may want to add extra seating to your TV area. You could gather beanbag chairs, sleeping bags, and extra pillows to make the space cozy. Or, with an adult's help, set up cushions or air mattresses on the floor for extra comfort.

You might also consider decorating the room in a Halloween theme. A few fun ideas: Set out plastic pumpkins with fake candles inside to help create a spooky mood once you dim the lights. Place small pumpkins or gourds on tables. Make paper chains in orange and black to drape around the space. Cut out spider and ghost shapes to hang from the ceiling.

4 fun movies for Halloween season

Check out one of these classics, from cute to creepy, for your movie night.

It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown

Halloween is a big night for the Peanuts gang. Even if you've already seen this fan favorite, it can be fun to rewatch it with a group.



Hocus Pocus



When three witches are accidentally freed by a teenage boy named Max in

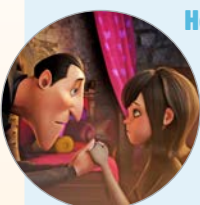
this comedy fantasy movie, Halloween night suddenly gets interesting!

Frankenweenie

In this animated stop-motion film, mayhem ensues when a young scientist named Victor Frankenstein brings his beloved pet dog back to life—as the bionic Frankenweenie.



Hotel Transylvania



The guests at Hotel Transylvania are like a who's who of

Halloween lore: Dracula runs the hotel, and a Frankenstein mummy and werewolves round out the guests. Find out what happens when the townspeople get word of this creepy vacation destination.

How to...



Craft cardboard haunted houses

What you need

- Toilet paper tubes
- Black paint and brush
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Scrap paper
- Scrap cardboard
- White glue
- Yellow paper
- Paper straws

Instructions

1. Paint all the tubes black and let dry.
2. Hold a paper tube upright and gently squeeze the top part until flat. With the flattened top facing you, use a pencil to make a dot in the middle of the top edge of the tube. This dot will help you know where to cut.
3. Cut the roofline: Starting from an inch or two down the side of the tube, cut at an angle toward the center dot at the top of the tube. This will make a slanted line. Take the triangular piece you cut off and use it as a template on

the opposite side of the tube to make another angled cut. Now you have a pointy roofline.

4. Place a folded strip of scrap paper over the house like a roof, then cut it down to the right size. Use that paper as a template to cut out a cardboard roof. Glue on top.
5. Glue on small yellow paper shapes for the windows and doors, as well as a piece of a paper straw for the chimney.
6. Continue by making a few houses out of single paper tubes or gluing a few tubes of different heights together to make a larger haunted house.

Make crispy monster treats

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 10 ounces marshmallows
- 6 cups Rice Krispies cereal
- Candy melts and eyes in assorted colors plus candy corn

Instructions

1. In a large saucepan, melt the butter over low heat. Add the marshmallows and stir until completely melted. Remove from heat.
2. Add the cereal and stir until well coated. Set aside until cool enough to handle but still flexible.
3. Using greased hands, form handfuls of the mixture into different blob and monster shapes. Set on a piece of parchment or waxed paper. Let cool.

4. Melt the candy melts according to the package directions. One at a time, hold a treat near the bottom and invert it into the bowl, turning it to coat. Use your fingers to smooth out the candy melt.
5. Return the treats to the paper and decorate as you wish with candy eyes and candy corn. Set aside monster treats until the coating has hardened. Makes about 15 treats.

FUN FACT
The recipe for Kellogg's Rice Krispies treats first appeared on Rice Krispies cereal boxes in 1941.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2), ALAMY (4)

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

In England during the 12th and 13th centuries, autumn was known as "haerfest," or harvest.



Plan a day of leaf peeping

Explore the stunning colors of fall foliage with this activity.

Autumn can be a great season to experience the outdoors with your friends and family. One popular activity is leaf peeping—spending time outdoors admiring the changing colors of the leaves. Here's some advice for getting started.

Understand the science

Trees with leaves that change colors in the fall are deciduous species, like oaks, maples, and birches. These types of trees have green leaves most of the year due to the chlorophyll they use to absorb energy from the Sun. As the days get colder and shorter in the fall, the leaves get less sunlight, which causes the green to fade and reveal other colors, like red, orange, and gold. After the leaves change color, they eventually fall to the ground. In the spring, the tree grows new leaves.

Pick a destination

Northern regions like New England and the upper Midwest are known for having incredible autumn leaves, but you can experience fall foliage in almost every state in the US. Depending on where you live, you might want to plan to head out into the countryside or mountains to see the best leaves your area has to offer. Talk to your family about planning a day out or a weekend trip. With an adult's help, map out your driving route. Identify scenic overlooks or parks where you can

get out of the car and take a hike or set up a picnic to admire the changing leaves up close.

Time your trip

Once you have your destination set, start planning when to go. "Peak" foliage is considered the time when fall leaves will be most colorful and plentiful on trees. You can visit tinyurl.com/TWJUS-leaves to see when the leaves are expected to change color at your planned destination. You'll notice that leaves first

start to change in more northern areas, then later in more southern areas. Since the weather can dictate when peak foliage occurs, local news or tourism sites may also report on how quickly the leaves are changing. Even if you go before or after "peak" season, you can still expect to spot beautiful colors.



See how many colors you can spot.

Document your observations

When you head out to look at the fall landscape, keep a visual record of what you see. You could print out a map and use colored pencils to draw in the different leaves you spotted. Or use a camera to take photos of some of your favorite sights. You can get creative, such as by lying on the ground and capturing the colorful leaves above you, taking a close-up of an especially beautiful leaf, or capturing a photo of one colorful tree. Try doing this every year!

4 fun leaf crafts to try this fall

Here are some creative ideas for what you can make with colorful autumn leaves.

Crown yourself

Cut a one-inch strip of cardboard a little larger than the circumference of your head. Staple or glue it together so you have a circle. Glue leaves around the outside.



Spray-paint them

Make a spray-paint leaf pattern. Start by adding a few drops of paint to a spray bottle, then fill the bottle with water. Lay a big piece of paper on the ground outdoors and arrange leaves on top. Spray paint on and around the leaves. Let dry, then remove the leaves to reveal your design.



Create prints

Use your leaves like a stamp: Paint one side with a few colors, then push the painted side down on paper and remove it. Use a few different leaves to make prints all over your paper.



Make people

With a paint pen, puffy paint, or permanent marker, gently draw eyes and smiles on a few leaves. Once the "faces" are dry, flip the leaves over and carefully tape down two pieces of pipe cleaner for "arms" and two for "legs."



BE A BETTER LISTENER

Sometimes it can be difficult to listen to what others are saying. However, being a good listener is an important quality in friendships, said Dr. Christopher Willard, a psychologist (person who studies mental health) at Harvard Medical School. Here's how to tune in to others.

- 1. Be present.** One of the easiest ways to hear what someone is saying is to stop what you're doing and listen to the other person. That includes putting down your phone, tablet, or any other item you're holding.
- 2. Ask questions.** When someone is done talking, ask a follow-up question. Knowing you will be asking a question will help you pay attention while the person is talking. The person will also notice that you care about what they're saying.
- 3. Use body language.** Show the other person you're paying attention by nodding in agreement and maintaining eye contact. These habits show people that you are open to hearing what they're saying.



How to...

FUN FACT

There are more than 150 species of coconut that can be found in over 80 countries.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Cook up coconut curry noodles

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 pound package extra firm tofu, diced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- ½ cup frozen edamame, shelled
- 13.6-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk
- 1½ tablespoon red curry paste (such as Thai Kitchen brand)
- 8-ounce can sliced water chestnuts, drained
- One package (12 to 14 ounces) heat and serve Thai-style noodles (such as Ka-Me brand)
- Juice of 1 lime, plus wedges for serving
- Thinly sliced green onion (optional)

Instructions

- Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high. Add the tofu and season generously with salt and pepper. Cook, turning the tofu cubes occasionally, until they are lightly golden, about 8 minutes.
- Stir in the red bell pepper and edamame and cook for 2 minutes. Add the coconut milk, 1 cup water, and the
- curry paste and mix well. Bring mixture to a gentle simmer, then reduce heat to medium. Add in the water chestnuts and noodles and cook 5 minutes more. Remove from heat and stir in the lime juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve bowls of curry noodles topped with green onion, if desired. Makes 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

REPAIR INSTEAD OF REPLACE ITEMS

When one of your possessions gets worn down or breaks, your first instinct might be to throw it away and buy a replacement. A more eco-friendly option is to repair the item if you can. Repairing—instead of replacing—an item keeps it out of the landfill and also saves the resources that would be used to produce a new one. There are many ways to make repairs. For example, you could add patches or embroidery over holes or stains in clothing or cut worn jeans into shorts. You might be able to save a broken plastic toy with clear craft glue. Even some electronics, like a speaker, can be fixed. Check tutorials on YouTube and ask for an adult's help.



Give your old items new life.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
More than 100 million people have the last name Wang, which is the most common surname in the world.

Explore your family's history

Learning more about your relatives' past can be fun and rewarding.

Genealogy (the study of family history) is a popular hobby in the US and around the world. Finding out about your close relatives as well as your ancestors (family members who lived in past times) can help you learn more about your cultural background, feel closer to your family, and strengthen your sense of identity. Here's how you can get started.

Make a family tree

One fun way to begin is by making a family tree. This is a chart that lists people you're related to. (There are many templates online that will give you an idea of how the tree could look.) On a large piece of paper, write the names of the people in your immediate family (your parents and siblings) across the bottom. With help from a parent or other relative, fill in additional family members and draw lines to show how they're connected. Include grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Keep adding names as far back as you or your relatives can remember.

Research names

Last names, also called surnames, are one way families may be linked across generations. When you look at your family tree, you may see a few common last names. These surnames can give you clues about your family's history. Some last names are related to jobs people may

have held (for example, the name Smith was originally used by blacksmiths), while others might be related to where a family lived. You can find out more about surnames at houseofnames.com or familysearch.org.

Learn your traditions

One way many families honor their heritage is by passing down traditions, such as how you celebrate holidays. This may include food customs that might have originated in a country or region where your relatives once lived. Ask a relative to show you how to make some of your family's special dishes, and write down the recipes for safekeeping. Other traditions that may be passed down are family stories and sentimental items. You and your immediate family can also create new family traditions together.

Plan a family reunion

One of the best ways to celebrate your family history and learn more is to get together with your relatives. Consider asking a parent or grandparent if they could help you plan a family reunion. Discuss a convenient location for everyone, whether it's at someone's home, a hotel or restaurant, or a local park. If it's not possible to have a reunion in person, you could plan a time for your relatives to join a video call. This could be a great opportunity to ask people to show photos, add to your family tree, or share their favorite traditions.



Bring your loved ones together.

4 creative ways to use family photos

Display and reminisce over favorite old pictures with these fun ideas.

Create a collage

Before your next family gathering, ask everyone to bring copies of old family photos. Use them to create a group collage on posterboard.



Match baby photos

Another fun thing to do at a family gathering:



Put a baby picture of each person on the table, and write a number beside each. Have attendees guess who's who. The person with the most correct guesses wins!

Assemble a scrapbook

A scrapbook is a great gift for a special family member. Ask relatives to share photos, keepsakes, and memories to include.



Make your own gift tags



When you exchange gifts with your family

members, print out current or old photos of the recipients and use double-sided tape to attach them to wrapped presents. Everyone can quickly identify their gifts by checking out the photos!



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
About 49 million tons of cardboard—the most recycled packaging material in the US—was recovered for recycling in 2022.

Craft animals from recycled cardboard

What you need

- Pieces of corrugated cardboard, such as from delivery boxes (check your recycling bin)
- Pencil and marker
- Scissors
- Craft paint
- Paintbrush
- Toilet paper tube
- White glue or hot glue (optional)
- Pipe cleaners

Instructions

1. Decide which animal you want to make, then draw the orangutan, polar bear, or tiger body on cardboard with a pencil. For the orangutan, be sure to include the arms. Use the photo above as a guide. Cut out your shape with scissors.
2. Using a separate piece of cardboard, draw the animal's legs with a pencil and cut those out. For the tiger and polar bear, draw two pairs of legs: one for the front and one for the back.
3. Using scissors, cut two slits at the bottom of the animal's body where you want the legs to go. Cut a slit at the top of each of your animal's legs in the middle. At the end, you'll use these slits to fit your animal's body and legs together.
4. Paint your animal. You can follow the designs and colors in the photo above or create your own look. Let dry. Use a marker to draw on eyes, a nose, and a mouth.
5. To turn your orangutan into a pencil holder, add a toilet paper
6. Assemble the body and legs of your animal by fitting them with the slits you made.
7. Use a pipe cleaner to make a tail. Cut it to the size you want and glue it to the back of your animal, curling it if desired.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK BE AN INGREDIENT DETECTIVE

It can be worthwhile to look at the labels on food packages. This is because some foods are made with ingredients that can be harmful to the environment. Palm oil, for example, found in about half of packaged foods, is a cause of deforestation in Asia. (Deforestation is when trees are cut down and new ones aren't planted to replace them.) Although some palm oil is grown in a way that doesn't harm the environment, some people think it is better to avoid the ingredient if possible. Something else to look for is how far away a product was made. If the product had to be transported on a plane to get to your area, gases were released into the environment.



Read food labels at the grocery store.



How to...



WOW!
More than 6 million people in the US practice some form of martial arts.

Try out martial arts

Get to know more about these ancient traditions of self-defense.

Martial arts are a form of combat skills that originated thousands of years ago. There are many different types, from karate to judo to jujitsu, which teach self-defense while also building confidence and increasing mental and physical strength. Here's how to get started.

Learn the background

Martial arts can be traced back as far as 3000 BCE. Many of them originated and were developed in Asian nations, but other countries, like Germany and Brazil, also created their own versions. Martial arts were originally used in ancient battles, and the different styles each have their own moves that require agility and concentration to execute.

Consider different styles

Among the different forms of martial arts, karate, tae kwon do, and Brazilian jiu-jitsu (which stems from judo) are considered good options for beginners because they're made up of simpler moves. Kids can learn to master the moves one by one, then combine them into more complicated sequences as they progress. One way to find out more about the various styles of martial arts and

which you might like best is by watching videos on YouTube. With an adult's help, you can also call or email a martial arts school in your community to ask questions.

Take a class

Many martial arts studios will allow you to take a complimentary beginner class to try it out. Once you connect with a martial art that you like, you can proceed with beginner classes. Some

community recreation departments also offer martial arts classes with qualified instructors. In addition, there are free online options that can help you get started. Two sites you can check out are dojogohomeschool.com and greatstartkarate.com.

Practice and compete

In every style of martial arts, it's particularly important to work on correct form, which takes time and patience. Many martial arts have a belt ranking system. In this type of system, you can progress to different belt levels, which are coded by color. As you improve, you might also have the opportunity to participate in martial arts competitions. This allows you to practice the moves you've mastered during your classes—and learn how to face opponents and adjust your strategy on the fly.



You can advance to different belt colors.

4 popular styles of martial arts

There are more than 180 types of martial arts. Here are some options that might interest you.

Karate

This type of martial art focuses on self-defense and targeting the weaker parts of the opponent's body with moves like elbow strikes, kicks, punches, and hand strikes.



Judo

With many techniques similar to wrestling, judo uses skills like



throwing and grappling an opponent to overcome them.

Jujitsu

This martial art form is based on the hand-to-hand techniques of the samurai.

Jujitsu involves close-combat moves that turn an opponent's force back against them.



Tai chi

Instead of being primarily used for self-defense, tai chi is a gentle



type of martial art focused on reducing stress and improving health. The slow, steady movements can strengthen muscles and flexibility while helping to clear the mind.

How to...



START UP A CONVERSATION

Sometimes it's hard to know what to say when you see someone you may not know very well. This could happen if you run into someone outside school, like at the grocery store, or if you meet someone new at an activity. Here are a few ways you can begin chatting.

- 1. Say hello.** A simple "Hi, Eli" is a friendly way to start. If you're talking to a new person, introduce yourself by saying, "Hi, I'm Riley. What's your name?"
- 2. Ask a question.** Start by asking, "How are you?" The other person may share something that leads to more conversation. You can also ask about something you have in common. One idea: "Have you seen any good movies lately?"
- 3. Give a compliment.** Saying something nice is another way to keep the conversation going. You could compliment the person on the shirt they're wearing, then follow up by asking where it came from.



DID YOU KNOW?

In one survey about preferred pasta shapes, 68% of respondents said spaghetti is their favorite.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, stovetop, blender, or food processor.

Make green goddess pasta salad

Ingredients

- 1 pound pasta
- 4 eggs, hard-boiled and roughly chopped
- 1 cup chopped Persian cucumber
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 clove garlic
- ¾ cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1½ cups loosely packed mixed chopped herbs (such as parsley, chives, dill, mint, basil, and/or tarragon)
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to package directions for al dente (firm), then drain and rinse under cold water. Set pasta aside.
2. Meanwhile, make the dressing. Combine the garlic, Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, herbs, lemon, and olive oil in a blender or food processor and puree until well combined. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper.
3. In a large bowl, combine the cooked pasta, hard-boiled eggs, cucumber, avocado, and chickpeas. Pour the dressing over the top and toss to coat. Makes 4 to 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

KEEP TENNIS BALLS OUT OF LANDFILLS

More than 125 million tennis balls end up in landfills every year. Tennis balls, which are made from rubber and felt, aren't biodegradable (able to break down) and can take 400 years to decompose. However, there are ways to help. Find out if your local recycling center or animal shelter accepts used tennis balls, and bring any you have there. You can also ask your town council if you can set up a bin at a local court to collect used tennis balls. Once you've collected at least 100 balls, an adult can help you reach out to organizations like RecycleBalls (recycleballs.org) or ReBounces (rebound.com), which recycle tennis balls into new items.



Round up tennis balls to recycle.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Researchers have found that more than 65 animal species—including seals, cows, and dogs—have their own form of laughter.



Perform stand-up comedy

Gain confidence and make people laugh with this hobby.

Stand-up is a type of comedy in which someone performs a series of jokes in front of a live audience. Kids can create a stand-up comedy act to perform for family and friends or at a school or community talent show. Through stand-up, you get to be creative, boost your confidence, and polish your public-speaking skills. Here are some tips to help you get started.

Get inspired

A good first step in stand-up is watching other comedians. With an adult's help, you can find some kid-friendly comedians on YouTube or on streaming services like Netflix and Hulu. (Some family-friendly comedians to check out together might be Jim Gaffigan, Anjelah Johnson, and Preacher Lawson.) Pay attention to what they do during their routine and what kinds of jokes work.

Write your material

To begin writing jokes, start brainstorming topics. Many comedians talk about their personal experiences or make humorous observations about popular topics like sports or movies. Think about who your audience will be and what will be relatable to them. For example, your friends would probably understand your funny observations about middle school, but your family may not. When you have an idea for a joke, approach it like writing a short essay. It should have a beginning that hooks the listener, followed by a middle that sets up characters

or provides information people need to know to understand the joke. Then finish with a "punch line"—the point of the joke.

Pull everything together

Once you have several jokes written, you can add them to a stand-up routine, called a "set." A set can be anywhere from a few minutes to more than an hour, but for beginners it's best to keep it short. Open your set with a joke that will get your audience laughing. Between jokes, include transitions to help link one story to the next. You should conclude with a strong "closer," one last joke that will leave your audience laughing.



Practice your performance.

Perfect your routine

Once you've created your set, it's time to practice. You can perform in front of a mirror or record yourself and play it back. This will help you see how long your set is and where you might make changes.

Next, perform in front of a friend or family member who can help you see what people laugh at the most or tell you if any of your jokes are confusing. Take notes and make changes as necessary.

Plan a performance

Once you feel comfortable with your stand-up material, it's time to perform! A party with family or friends can be a good place to start. When you're ready to perform, remember to take a few deep breaths. Then relax, be yourself, and have fun!

4 funny books you'll love

Get inspiration for your own comedy with these books that are packed with laugh-out-loud lines and silly scenes.

Mayor Good Boy

In this book by Dave Scheidt and Miranda Harmon, a puppy politician helps the town while also making readers crack up.

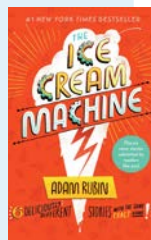


Marcus Makes a Movie

Written by comedian Kevin Hart, this graphic novel follows a middle school student who decides to make his own movie. Watching him figure out how is both hilarious and inspiring.

The Ice Cream Machine

This book of stories by Adam Rubin includes six funny tales about the frozen treat, including one about an ice cream stand run by a penguin.



Funny Girl: Funniest Stories Ever

Get ready to giggle at short stories by 25 funny female writers. This collection, edited by author and librarian Betsy Bird, includes sidesplitting stories by Cece Bell, Shannon Hale, and Raina Telgemeier.



How to...

FUN FACT

Duct tape got its name in part from the fact that the tape can repel water, like duck feathers can.



Craft a duct tape water bottle holder

What you need:

- Water bottle
- Scrap paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Duct tape
- Ruler

Instructions

1. Cut a rectangular pattern for the water bottle holder from scrap paper. The height should be a few inches shorter than your water bottle, and the width should be the bottle's circumference plus about an inch more. Check that the size is right by rolling the pattern into a cylinder with the ends overlapping slightly. Hold it in place, and make sure the bottle can go in and out comfortably.
2. Create a duct tape sheet: Cut a strip of duct tape to the width of the pattern, and lay it down on your work surface, sticky side up. Lay more strips, sticky side up, overlapping each other until

the sheet is as tall as your pattern. (For a vertical striped holder, lay the strips down the tall way.) Cover the sticky side of your sheet with more strips of tape, this time with the sticky side down.

3. Roll the duct tape sheet into a cylinder and tape up the seam with more duct tape on the inside and outside.

4. To make the bottom for the holder, measure across its bottom opening. Cut a strip of tape to that length and a second strip two inches longer. Center the shorter strip on the longer strip and press the sticky sides together. Use the two sticky ends of this strip to adhere it to each side of the bottom of the holder.

5. To make the strap, determine how long you would like it to be. Add four inches to that measurement and cut a piece of duct tape to that length. Fold the piece in half or thirds the long way to make a skinny strap. Tape the strap to the inside of the top of the cylinder, overlapping about two inches on each side. Add a piece of tape to the outside for strength.

Helpful tips

- If you have trouble cutting through duct tape, you can create the duct tape sheet on wax paper and cut through the wax paper and duct tape at the same time.
- Instead of making a duct tape strap, you can use ribbon.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK REDUCE YOUR IMPACT ON NATURE

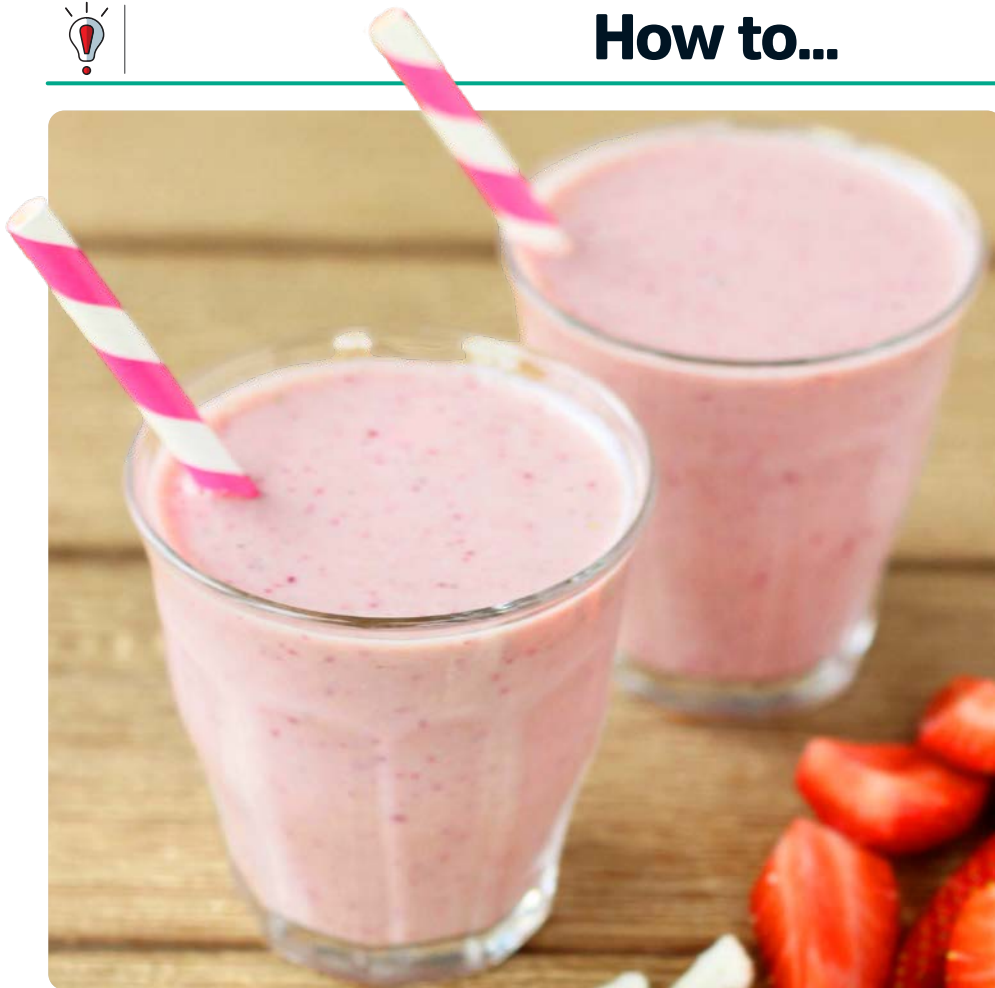
When you're enjoying the outdoors—whether you're at a local park or camping in the wilderness—it's important to minimize your impact on the environment around you. Anything you leave behind, even by accident, could be harmful to animals or plants. To reduce your impact on nature, practice the principles of "leave no trace." That means leaving an area exactly as you found it when you arrived. Always look around to make sure you picked up everything you brought with you. This includes carrying out trash and food scraps to dispose of properly. It's also best not to take items you find in nature. Rocks, shells, and sticks are part of the local ecosystem and should be left alone.

Leave nature just as you found it.





How to...



STRAWBERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup frozen strawberries
- ½ cup raw cauliflower pieces
- 1 tablespoon almond butter
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey

Instructions

1. Gather all the ingredients for your smoothie and a blender.
2. Place the ingredients in the blender, and put the lid on firmly. Check with an adult before turning it on.
3. Turn the blender on at the slowest speed and blend. Slowly increase the speed to high.
4. If the mixture has a hard time blending, turn off the blender and be sure to unplug it, remove the lid, and stir with a wooden spoon. Put the lid back on, replug blender, and blend until smooth. Pour into glasses and enjoy. Serves 2.

OVERNIGHT OATS

Ingredients

- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup applesauce
- ½ cup plain Greek-style yogurt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup milk
- Chopped apples, for serving
- Chopped walnuts, for serving
- Honey, for serving

Instructions

1. Combine the oats, applesauce, yogurt, and cinnamon in a large bowl and mix well. Cover bowl with plastic wrap or aluminum foil, and refrigerate overnight. **Tip:** Greek yogurt works well in overnight oats because it's nice and thick. But you can use regular plain yogurt if you don't have the Greek kind.
2. The next morning, remove bowl from refrigerator. Stir milk into the oats to loosen them, then spoon oat mixture into bowls.
3. Warm in microwave if desired, then top with chopped apples, walnuts, and a drizzle of honey. Serves 2–4.

DID YOU KNOW?
Oats were introduced in North America by Scottish settlers in 1602.



AVY PALANJIAN, ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; ON RIGHT PAGE: ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; JOY HOWARD



How to...

CULINARY CUSTOM

A North African tradition is to celebrate a new home or a holiday by making couscous, which symbolizes good luck.



COUSCOUS SALAD

Ingredients

- 3 cups water
- 2 cups pearl couscous
- ⅓ cup pine nuts
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 cup basil leaves
- ½ cup olive oil
- ⅓ cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- ½ English cucumber, quartered
- 4 ounces bocconcini (small mozzarella balls), halved

Instructions

1. Bring 3 cups of water to a boil in a large pot. Add the couscous and cook according to package directions. Transfer to a large serving bowl.
2. Meanwhile, carefully toast the pine nuts in a toaster oven or dry skillet over medium heat until just starting to brown. Watch closely to avoid burning. Let cool slightly.
3. Pulse the garlic in a food processor to finely chop. Add the cooled pine nuts and basil leaves and pulse to combine. With the processor running, slowly drizzle in the olive oil, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed. Add the cheese and pulse to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Add the pesto to the bowl with the couscous and toss to coat. Add the tomatoes, cucumber, and mozzarella balls. Toss again. Spoon the salad into bowls and serve. Makes 4 servings.

SEASONED AFTER-SCHOOL SNACK MIX

Ingredients

- 3 cups mini pretzels
- 3 cups oyster crackers
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1¼ teaspoons granulated garlic (or garlic powder)
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ¾ teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1¼ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons plus two teaspoons of Parmesan cheese or nutritional yeast

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 250° F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Put pretzels and crackers in a big bowl. In a saucepan, melt butter on low. Add vinegar, dill, garlic, onion powder, paprika, salt, sugar, and Parmesan or nutritional yeast and stir.
3. Pour mixture over pretzels and crackers. Stir gently to coat evenly. Spread on the prepared baking sheet and bake until golden and crisp, tossing every 15 minutes, for about 45 minutes. Let cool before serving. Serves 4.





Easy, tasty recipes to try

From breakfast to lunch, plus snacks and treats, these dishes are simple to whip up before or after school.

COOKIES AND CREAM CRISPY TREATS

Ingredients

- 1½ cups mini store-bought cookies such as sandwich cookies, chocolate chip, or fudge striped, halved or quartered
- 4 tablespoons salted butter
- 6 cups marshmallows
- 6 cups crispy rice cereal
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, mixer, oven, stovetop, or blender for any of these recipes.



FUN FACT

The word "cookie" comes from the Dutch word *koekje*, meaning "little cake."

Instructions

1. Place ½ cup of the cookies in a small bowl. Set aside. Line an 8-inch square baking dish with parchment paper. Spritz with cooking spray.
2. In a large pot over low heat, melt the butter. Add the marshmallows and melt, stirring frequently, until the mixture is smooth. Add half the rice cereal and the remaining cookies. Stir, then add the remaining cereal and vanilla.
3. Stir until evenly coated, then place in the prepared dish. Press into the pan, then top the mixture with the remaining cookies. Place a sheet of parchment on top and smooth evenly, taking care not to press the treats with too much pressure. Let cool completely before slicing into squares. Makes 9 bars.

PANCAKE SQUARES

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2¼ cups milk
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 8 tablespoons butter, melted, plus more for serving
- 1 banana, sliced
- ½ cup blueberries
- Maple syrup, for serving

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Generously coat a half sheet pan with cooking spray or softened butter.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, and cinnamon. This is your dry mixture.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the milk with the eggs. Mix in the melted butter. This is your wet mixture.
4. Make a hole in the center of the dry mixture and pour in wet mixture. Stir to form a batter. (Batter may be slightly lumpy.)
5. Slowly pour the batter onto sheet pan and spread evenly.
6. Arrange bananas and blueberries on top as you choose.
7. Using oven mitts, put the sheet pan in the oven. Bake 16 to 18 minutes or until golden brown. Use mitts to take it out.
8. Ask an adult to help you cut the pancake into 12 squares. Serve warm with butter and maple syrup. Freeze leftover squares for later in the week. Makes 12 servings.



JOY HOWARD: ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE;
ON RIGHT PAGE: JOY HOWARD; AMY PALANJIAN



EVERYTHING BAGEL RICOTTA DIP

Ingredients

- ¾ cup whole milk ricotta
- 4-ounce package goat cheese, softened
- 1 small clove garlic, grated
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1 tablespoon everything bagel seasoning
- Fresh cut vegetables, for serving

Instructions

1. Place the ricotta, goat cheese, garlic, lemon zest and juice, and olive oil in a large bowl. Add a few pinches of salt and pepper.
2. Use a hand mixer set at medium speed to blend the mixture until light and fluffy.
3. Transfer the dip to a small bowl, then use the back of a spoon to make a swirl in the top. Sprinkle with the everything bagel seasoning and drizzle with olive oil. Serve with cut vegetables. Makes 4 servings.



EGG BITES

Ingredients

- Nonstick spray
- ½ cup broccoli
- ½ cup cottage cheese
- ¼ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Grease a muffin pan with 12 mini muffin cups with nonstick spray.
2. Place the broccoli on a cutting board, and with an adult's help, chop broccoli into small pieces with a knife.
3. Place the chopped broccoli in a medium-size bowl. Add the cottage cheese, cheddar cheese, eggs, onion powder, and Parmesan cheese. Stir together with a spoon.
4. Spoon the mixture into the 12 muffin cups. Pour mixture into each cup almost to the top.
5. Using potholders, place the muffin pan in the oven. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until the muffins are golden brown. Remove pan with potholders.
6. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Makes 12 muffins.



WOW!

People in the US consume an average of 278 eggs per person each year.



How to...

WOW!

About 72% of grandparents say being a grandparent is the most important part of their life.



Make grandparents feel loved

Take time to honor special people in your life on Grandparents' Day.

Since 1979, Grandparents' Day has been observed in the US on the first Sunday after Labor Day. This year it's being celebrated on September 10. Here are some simple and fun ways to show your grandparents how much you appreciate them.

Surprise them

Even though Grandparents' Day has been marked for more than 40 years, many families don't know about it. (In one survey, about 66% of grandparents said they have never celebrated Grandparents' Day.) If you haven't observed the occasion before, surprise your grandparents this year. This could be as simple as sending a card or making them a special treat.

Spend time together

Many grandparents say they wish they had more individual time with their grandchildren. So one of the best things you can do for Grandparents' Day is to simply spend time together. You could plan to share a meal, go for a walk, read together, or invite them to one of your activities. Another way to connect is to ask your grandparents to teach you about one of their hobbies and then do it together. This could be anything from knitting to fishing to cooking favorite family recipes. While you do this, tell them about what's going on in your life.



Share your interests.

Record a message

If you can't physically be with your grandparents, consider sending them a special message. Ask your parents for help recording you on video. You can start by wishing them a happy Grandparents' Day, then share some of your favorite memories of times you've spent with them. If you have siblings, they can join your video or create their own. It's like a digital card, and your grandparents can watch it when they're missing you.

Preserve your family history

A survey showed that 90% of grandparents think it's important that their grandkids know about the heritage they share. Many grandparents are like the historians of their family. They know the most about where your relatives came from, and remember stories about when your parents were young. One way to learn more about your family's history is to spend time going through old photos and keepsakes with your grandparents. Ask them what pictures and mementos they have saved, and look at them together while discussing them. Another option is to interview a grandparent on video and share the result with the rest of your family. (See some suggested questions to ask at right.)

Interview elders about their lives

Learn more about your grandparents' past by asking them a few questions, like these.

What was your favorite toy as a child?

Start your interview with a fun question, like what your grandparent played with as a child. Have you played with similar toys?

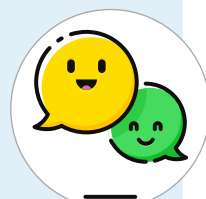


What subject was your favorite in school?

It can be interesting to find out whether you have similar academic interests.

What life advice do you have?

Older adults have been through lots of ups and downs during their lives. You can probably learn from their experiences.



What do you think has changed most since you were a child?

In many ways, the world looked and operated differently when your grandparents were your age. Ask them what has changed and whether they think the changes are an improvement or not. You might also ask them what has stayed the same.



GETTY IMAGES

How to...

Why my grandparents are important to me

Grandparents' Day is coming up on September 10, 2023. This is a day when people of different generations, like grandchildren and their grandparents, are encouraged to connect. We invite you to use this form to write down your thoughts about one or more of your grandparents—or any special older people in your life. You can also share this form with them. They may enjoy knowing what you have to say! We would also love to read what you write and see your artwork. To share your thoughts and drawing with us, ask an adult to email your form to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at theweekjunior.com/activities.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Grandparents' Day, explain why your grandparents are important to you.

If you could describe your grandparents in three words, which words would you choose?

What is your favorite memory of being with your grandparents?

Draw a picture of you with your grandparents.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.



BACK TO
SCHOOL
2023

How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Cedar trees produce the most common type of wood used to make pencils.

Get organized for school

Start the year off strong with these tips and tricks for staying on track.

It's a great feeling to begin the school year organized! Having what you need where you can easily find it can make it simpler for you to manage your time and your assignments. Here's how to get started.

Gather supplies

Check your school's website for a list of supplies you need for the year, then add anything else you'd like to have. Before going to a store to buy new items, look around your home to see what you still have from last year. (You may find you have enough pencils, for example, or you can simply remove used pages from a barely used notebook you already own.) After you gather what you have, ask your family for help getting what you still need. Also, be sure to talk to a parent about any forms (like health assessments or activity permission slips) that need to be filled out and signed.



Set up a workspace.

Create a homework station

Another way to prepare for the new school year is to take some time to consider where you will do your homework. Start by thinking about your own learning style. Do you like company while working? If so, your kitchen table could be a good spot. It might be useful to fill a small handled basket with homework supplies (like pencils and index cards) that you can move onto and off the table as needed. If you prefer quiet,

consider your bedroom for homework time. You can set up a small desk or table, use containers like cups or a tray to keep your supplies organized, and add personal items as you wish. If you use a computer or tablet for schoolwork, choose a place to keep it plugged in and charged.

Write down important dates

A planner or calendar is a simple way to stay on top of your schedule, due dates, and appointments. Being able to see at a glance what you have coming up in the following days or weeks can also help you plan out your time and keep you from forgetting anything. You can use a paper wall calendar, a notebook planner, or an electronic calendar on a phone or tablet. The best system is the one that works for you!

Prep for each class

The best way to keep notes and papers organized is to group them by subject in a binder or folder. To do this effectively, create a labeled binder section or folder for every class you're taking, then prioritize putting away papers and assignments in their correct spots throughout the year. Do the same on your computer by using an electronic folder for each subject. When it's time to study for a test or prepare for a project, you'll know exactly where to find what you need.

Steps to streamline weekday mornings

Leaving for school on time doesn't have to be stressful. Here's how you can begin each day smoothly.

Prep for school the night before

Before you go to bed, set yourself up for success the next day. Pack your bag, lay out your clothes, and get your lunch ready.



Consider a checklist

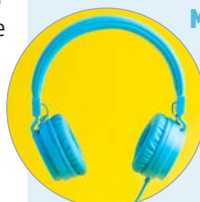


Put a small whiteboard by the door and make a checklist of

what you need every day—like your lunch and water bottle—then check them off before you leave the house.

Have a go-to breakfast

Taking the guesswork out of what to eat every morning can save time. On Sunday, prepare one breakfast, like muffins or a big batch of oatmeal, to eat every morning. Switch it up each week!



Make mornings more fun

Having a morning ritual—something you do every

day—can help motivate you to get out of bed. For example, a ritual might be listening to a special playlist as you get ready for school.

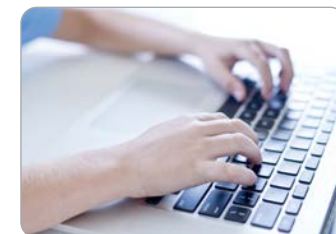


How to...

IMPROVE YOUR TYPING SKILLS

Learning to type more accurately and quickly can help you complete your work faster and more easily. Here's how.

- 1. Get in position.** Set your computer on a desk or table. Sit up straight in a chair with your screen about 15 to 25 inches away from your face. Let your hands rest on the keyboard, with your arms bent at the elbows.
- 2. Focus on your fingers.** Start with your left pointer finger on the F key and your right pointer on the J key. Then let your other fingers fall on the D, S, and A for the left hand and K, L, and the semicolon for the right hand. Rest both thumbs on the space bar. This position will allow you to easily reach all the keys on the board.
- 3. Practice.** Start by typing out things you know well, like lyrics to a favorite song or the lines of a poem. Focus on accuracy first. You'll get faster with experience. As you get more comfortable, try to type without looking at the keyboard. You can even lay a small hand towel over your hands to keep you from peeking.



FUN FACT
One of the oldest existing bookmarks dates back to the 6th century and was made of ornamental leather.

Make an animal bookmark

What you need

- Colored duct tape
- Sheet of wax paper
- Sharp scissors
- Pencil
- Permanent marker
- Pinking shears (optional)
- Circular items for tracing, such as a quarter

Instructions

- Cut a piece of duct tape about 8 inches long. Stick it to the wax paper. Cut a second piece of tape of the same length. Flip the wax paper over and stick the second piece to the wax paper, making sure it lines up with the tape on the other side. Trim away extra wax paper.
- Draw onto the duct tape any shapes that will be at the top and bottom of your bookmark, such as the bunny's ears, the branches on the sloth's tree, and arms, legs, and tails. Use scissors to trim around these parts.
- Create shapes, such as the zebra's snout and stripes, the dog's ears, and the sloth's face. Cut and place a piece of duct tape on another piece of wax paper. Draw the desired shapes onto the duct tape. Cut out the shapes. For each shape, pull the wax paper away and place the shape onto your bookmark.
- Use permanent marker to draw eyes, a mouth, a nose, fingers, and toes.
- For the lion's mane, place duct tape on the wax paper. Draw a circle on the tape and cut it out with pinking shears. Pull the wax paper away and place mane on the bookmark. Make the lion's face by tracing a smaller circle on a piece of duct tape on wax paper. Remove wax paper and place face in the center of the mane.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK BUY PRODUCTS WITH LESS PACKAGING

You may notice that most things you buy come in packaging that immediately gets thrown away. This can be harmful to the environment because packaging uses up natural resources and fills landfills. One way you can cut down on this waste is to choose products that have less or no packaging. At the grocery store, you and your family can bring reusable bags to collect fruits and vegetables instead of buying produce pre-wrapped in plastic. When shopping for other products, compare packaging. For example, you could buy bar soap that comes in a cardboard box, which is biodegradable (able to break down), instead of a plastic bottle of liquid soap.



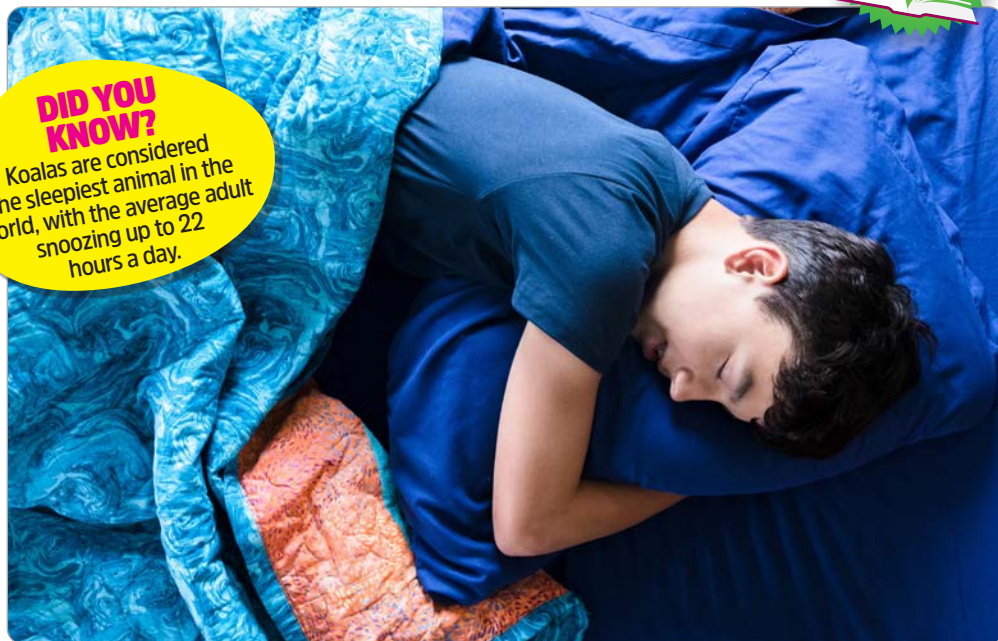
Bring reusable shopping bags to the store.



How to...

BACK TO SCHOOL 2023

DID YOU KNOW?
Koalas are considered the sleepest animal in the world, with the average adult snoozing up to 22 hours a day.



Get into a sleep routine

These tips can help you feel rested and ready for returning to school.

Summer is wrapping up, and you're checking off all the supplies you need for an awesome school year. But there's something else you should think about when preparing for school: making sure you're sleeping enough. Getting nine to 12 hours of sleep per night can help kids your age feel their best and do better in school. If you've been staying up later over the summer, here are some smart steps you can take now to get your sleep back on track.

Stick to a bedtime

Going to bed at about the same time every night helps your body get used to a schedule and fall asleep more easily. One way to pinpoint your ideal bedtime is to think about what time you need to wake up in the morning and then count backward from there. For example, if you want to get 10 hours of sleep and have to wake up at 7 am to get ready for school, you would need to be asleep at 9 pm and start winding down earlier.

Wind down before bed

Try to spend about an hour before bed relaxing so your body and mind are ready for sleep. To use this time wisely, break it up into three 20-minute parts. For the first 20 minutes, get yourself prepared for the next day by setting up your backpack, laying out your clothes, and making your lunch. This helps ease your mind while

you go to bed, since you won't be worrying about taking care of those tasks in the morning. Next, set aside 20 minutes for showering and brushing your teeth. Finally, for the last 20 minutes, do something relaxing that helps you fall asleep more easily (like reading a book, listening to calming music, or meditating). If you can't sleep after 20 minutes of lying in bed, it's OK to get up and do something else, such as reading a book, until you feel tired enough to drift off to sleep.

Don't sabotage your sleep

What you eat and do during the day can affect your sleep too. Try to avoid drinks and food that have caffeine (like soda, tea, and chocolate) in the afternoon and evening. Exercise can help you feel more tired, but working out within a couple of hours of your bedtime can make it hard to wind down. Try not to

text, watch TV, or play video games for at least two hours before bed because the light from the screens—even a small screen like the one on your phone—can trick your body into thinking it's daytime.

Stay consistent

It's tempting to sleep in on weekends, but oversleeping on some days can interfere with your sleep rhythms the rest of the week. Wake up at your usual time, or as close to it as you can, to stay well rested all week.



Wake at the same time each day.

4 interesting facts about sleeping

Have you ever wondered what happens—or doesn't—while you're snoozing? Check out this sleep trivia.

Scent science

Studies have shown that noise can wake us from slumber but smells won't. This is one of the reasons fire alarms were invented.



Colorful dreaming

Most people experience dreams in color, research shows. However, about 12% of the population dreams in black and white.



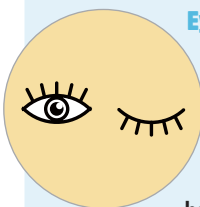
Staying still

Your brain keeps most of your muscles from being able to move during the time period when you dream most. This prevents you from acting out what you're dreaming.



Eyes wide open

The record for the longest time a human has stayed awake is 11 days and 25 minutes. Randy Gardner, age 17, set the record at the 10th Annual Great San Diego Science Fair in 1964. (He took a 14-hour nap afterward.)



How to...

BACK TO SCHOOL 2023



FUN FACT
Before the modern eraser was invented, students used pieces of bread to wipe away mistakes.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Make DIY notebooks and erasers

What you need

- Felt
- Scissors
- Hot glue (with an adult's help)
- Notebook or journal
- Eraser clay
- Toothpick
- Pencil
- Washi tape
- Fabric glue
- Yarn

Instructions

1. To make the apple notebook: Cut an apple shape from a piece of felt. (Make sure it's long enough to hold a pencil.) With an adult's help, adhere apple to the notebook with hot glue. Let dry.
2. Leaf pencil topper: Using your fingers, shape a ball of eraser clay into a leaf. Press toothpick into center. Gently push the pencil end into the leaf to make a hole, then remove. Bake the eraser according to package directions. Let it cool, then add it to the top of a green pencil (or wrap a pencil with green washi tape).
3. Milkshake notebook: Cut a glass shape from a piece of white felt. Then cut a smaller version from pink felt and adhere to the white "glass" with fabric glue. With an adult's help, hot glue the "glass" to the notebook.
4. "Straw" pencil with strawberry eraser: Wrap a white pencil with a strip of red tape. Then shape a ball of red eraser clay into a strawberry. Gently push the pencil's eraser end into the strawberry to make a hole, then remove pencil. Use the toothpick to poke seed holes. Use green clay for leaves and press gently to top. Bake

- according to package directions. Let cool, then add eraser to pencil.
5. Hot dog notebook: Cut an oval out of yellow felt, then cut a notch in the top (to insert a pen or pencil) and bottom to resemble a bun. Cut a narrow oval out of red felt for the hot dog. Use fabric glue to adhere hot dog to bun and add a string of yarn for mustard. With an adult's help, hot glue bun to notebook.
 6. Hamburger eraser: Knead yellow eraser clay into two balls and flatten into buns. Roll red clay into a burger and green clay into lettuce. Bake according to directions. Let cool.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK REDUCE PAPER TOWEL USAGE

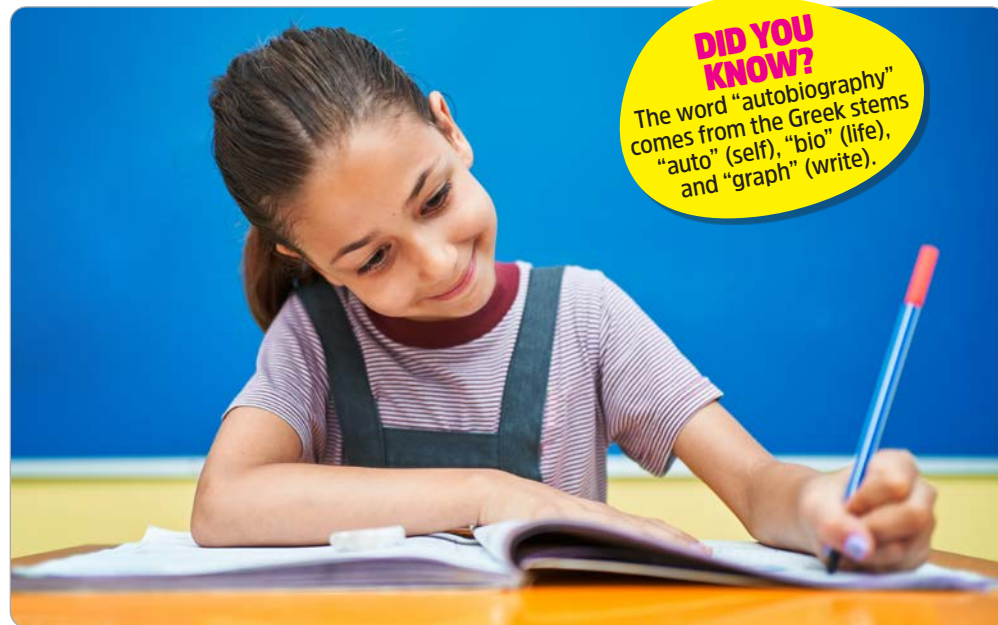
One way to make your family's kitchen more eco-friendly is to try to use fewer paper towels. Using paper towels can be harmful to the environment because they are produced using trees and other natural resources and also end up taking up space in landfills after they're thrown away. Instead, talk to your family about cleaning up messes in the kitchen with reusable products when you can. For example, keep a basket of clean cloth kitchen towels or dish rags in the kitchen and a small basket under the sink for dirty ones. When the basket is full, put them in the washing machine and use them again.



JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

The word “autobiography” comes from the Greek stems “auto” (self), “bio” (life), and “graph” (write).

Write your autobiography

Tell the story of your life with this creative activity.

An autobiography is the story of a person’s life, written by that person. Writing your autobiography can be a fun way to remember and record important events that have happened in your life and, if you choose, share them with others. Here’s how to get started.

Brainstorm first

To get an idea of what to include in your autobiography, start by reading someone else’s autobiography. (You can check out the options at right.) As you read, pay attention to the types of stories the author includes and how they tie the different events together so the reader can easily follow along. Next, start brainstorming some details you would want to include in your own autobiography. You can make a big list of important information about yourself—like where you were born and where you live—then add major life events or favorite memories. If you get stuck for ideas, scroll through old photos or ask a family member to relay stories of your childhood.

Create an outline

Before you start writing, make an outline of your story to help you stay organized. An autobiography is usually written in chronological order, meaning it would start when you were born and end with the present. This means your outline can be a timeline where you put your oldest memories first. Look at all

the memories you jotted down while brainstorming, and list them in chronological order. This will be the order you can use in your autobiography.

Write your draft

Once you have your outline, it’s time to start writing a first draft. While your outline is more like a list, the autobiography should include fuller descriptions of the events in your life. You should write in the past tense and include interesting details to help bring your story to life. As you write the autobiography, you may start to see common themes. Many of the events you’ve included might focus on your friendships, for example, or how you’ve handled changes throughout your life. These common themes can help connect the various parts of your story. You can also include some reflections at the end about how you noticed these themes and what they mean to you.

Revise and share

When you’re writing an autobiography, you may need to revise your writing until you are happy with the result. One thing that may help you make revisions is to read it out loud to yourself. As you read, ask yourself questions: Does this sound like me? Are there any extra words I don’t need? Am I missing any key parts of my story? After you make any adjustments, you could ask a family member or friend to read your autobiography too.



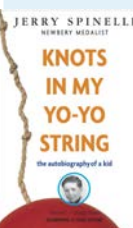
Fill out the details.

4 autobiographies to read this summer

One of these books can help you learn about interesting people and get inspired to write your own story.

Grace, Gold & Glory: My Leap of Faith

Gabrielle Douglas, a Black gymnast and Olympic gold medalist, writes about her childhood, her intense training, and the joy of being an Olympic champion.



Knots in My Yo-Yo String

Author Jerry Spinelli spent his childhood trying to keep everything tidy. A tangled yo-yo

string threatens his neat streak but changes his life.

March: Book One

John Lewis was a congressman and famous civil rights activist. One of a series of three, this autobiographical graphic novel tells the story of his childhood and a formative meeting he had with Martin Luther King Jr. as a teen.



Reaching for the Moon

In 1969, NASA’s Apollo 11 mission put humans on the Moon. Behind that mission

was a team that included NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson, who overcame adversity as one of the few Black women in her field.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); BOOKS: COURTESY OF PUBLISHERS (4)



How to...

CLEAN UP YOUR FAMILY’S CAR

You can help get your family’s ride squeaky-clean. Here’s how.

- 1. Start on the inside.** Throw away any trash that’s in the car, and take out and put away any items that don’t belong there (like sweatshirts and cups). If you have a small portable vacuum cleaner, you can use that to clean dirt or crumbs off the floor. Take a damp rag and wipe down seats and surfaces.
- 2. Soap it up.** Once you’re ready to move to the outside, fill a bucket with warm water and add a few squirts of car soap. (An adult can buy this at an auto supply store.) Use a soft sponge to wash the entire car, especially extra dirty spots like the tire rims.
- 3. Make it shine.** Take a hose and rinse off all the soap suds from top to bottom. Let the car dry for a few minutes. Then look it over and see if there are any spots you need to scrub and rinse again. Now is also a good time to use a spray glass cleaner and a microfiber cloth to wipe down the windows and the lights.



TASTY TRADITION

A BLT—bacon, lettuce, and tomato on bread—is one of the most popular sandwiches in the US.



WARNING! Ask an adult’s permission before using a knife or the oven.

Build a salmon BLT sandwich

Ingredients

- 8 strips of bacon
- 1 pound skin-on salmon filet
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Salt and ground pepper, to taste
- 8 slices of crusty bread, like ciabatta
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 4 large leaves of lettuce, such as Boston or Bibb
- 1 large tomato, cut in slices

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400° F. Arrange bacon in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet lined with foil. Bake on the lower oven rack for 20 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through, or until the bacon is browned and crisp.
2. Remove bacon to a plate lined with a paper towel to drain, reserving the bacon fat on the baking sheet.
3. Meanwhile, line another baking sheet with foil and set salmon in the center, skin side down. Drizzle the salmon with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake salmon on

the top rack until it’s pink and cooked through and the fish flakes easily with a fork, 12 to 18 minutes.

4. Use a large spatula to remove the salmon to a plate, leaving the skin behind on the baking sheet. Break the salmon into generous chunks and divide into 4 equal portions.
5. Dip the bread slices in the reserved bacon fat, then transfer to the oven to toast until golden, about 5 minutes. Spread the mayonnaise on half of the bread slices. Layer the bacon, salmon, lettuce, and tomato slices on the toasted bread. Makes 4 sandwiches.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

SAVE MORE PAPER WHEN YOU PRINT

Every year, about one billion trees’ worth of paper is thrown away in the US. Even though trees are planted to replace the ones used to make paper, it’s important to be mindful of how much paper you use to protect the natural resources trees offer. There are several ways you can save paper when you print from a computer. First, before you print, preview what the document will look like on paper. This way, you can be sure not to print pages you don’t need. Check for spelling errors or other corrections before you print so you can avoid having to print something more than once. Finally, print on both sides of the paper to reduce the amount of paper you use.

Print only the pages you need.





How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

One survey found that 66% of Americans would rather drive to their vacation destination than take a plane.



Take a family road trip

Plan an adventurous journey that offers something fun for everyone.

Road trips are a great option for vacation because they allow you to see multiple places in one trip and can be customized to what your family wants to do and see. A successful road trip also takes some planning. Here are some steps to take before you hit the road.

Pick a date

First you and your family will want to figure out when you can take a road trip and for how long. You can have everyone sit down with a calendar and decide when you can take time off together. You may find you have a week at the end of the summer when you're free to travel or a long weekend in the fall when you might have an extra day off from school. Once you've determined what can work, have everyone add the trip dates to their calendars.

Choose your destination

Next you'll need to decide where to go. Discuss potential destinations and any special factors to consider, like the weather. You and your family could choose a place you've always wanted to visit, or perhaps there's an area that has something special at the same time you're going, like a Labor Day weekend festival or apple picking in the fall. Just be sure to choose a location that gives you time to get there and back—and enjoy your visit—in the number of days you

have. You may want to discuss limiting driving time to four to six hours per day to build in enough time to make frequent stops, enjoy meals, and take breaks and explore.

Plan the route

Next, you can map out your road trip. Plug in your current city and final destination into a website or app like Google Maps and start considering good places to stop to sleep at night and what sights you might want to visit along the way. You may also want to make sure there is extra time to be flexible, in case you want to be spontaneous and stop at places you see from the car. Another option is to use a website like roadtrippers.com. If you put in your route, the site will populate a list of interesting things to see on your drive.



Make time for frequent stops.

Load up the car

Have your car stocked with necessities like water, snacks, and first aid supplies in case of an emergency. You'll also want to think about what to have with you in the car to stay entertained, such as activity books or travel versions of board games. You and your family could also discuss downloading an audiobook or podcast to listen to together. Also, make a list of fun games to play in the car, like "21 Questions" or working together to spot license plates from all 50 states.

Roadside attractions worth stopping for

Many popular road trip routes around the country feature fun sights along the way. Here are a few to know about.

Carhenge

Located along Highway 87 in Nebraska, this attraction features 38 old cars arranged in a circle and stacked to resemble the famous Stonehenge monument in England.



Leaning Tower of Niles

In Niles, Illinois, you can see a replica of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a famous landmark in Italy. It's exactly half its size.



Tower of Pisa, a famous landmark in Italy. It's exactly half its size.

Big Blue Bug

If you drive through Providence, Rhode Island, on interstate 95, keep an eye out for the world's biggest bug. This steel-and-fiberglass termite statue is 928 times the size of an actual bug.



World's Largest Chest of Drawers

The city of High Point, North Carolina,



home to many furniture manufacturers, features the world's largest dresser, complete with socks hanging out. It stands 38 feet tall.

How to...



HAVE A MOVIE NIGHT AT HOME

A cozy evening in the living room will be even more enjoyable with these tips.

- 1. Schedule it** Talk to your family about days that would work for a movie night. If you want to make it a regular activity, take that into consideration when choosing a day. You may decide that every Friday night works or maybe the first Wednesday evening of every month.
- 2. Pick a movie** Choose the movie ahead of time so you can look forward to it. You can alternate who gets to choose the movie every week.
- 3. Add snacks** Popcorn is a classic movie snack that's great plain, or you can set up a popcorn bar. Place a large bowl of popcorn on the counter with small bowls of toppings—like chocolate chips, pretzels, small candies, or garlic powder seasoning. Give each person a bowl to self serve.
- 4. Get comfy** Add sleeping bags and pillows to make the room inviting. For extra cozy viewing, you could put an air mattress on the floor. Dim the lights and enjoy the movie!



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife.

ISLAND INSPIRATION
The Caprese salad is named after the Italian island of Capri, where it's believed to have first been made.



Make a tomato and peach Caprese salad

Ingredients

- 12 to 16 ounces of assorted cherry tomatoes
- 2 ripe peaches
- One 4-ounce ball of fresh mozzarella
- Freshly picked basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. On a cutting board, use a knife to carefully slice each cherry tomato into two halves.
2. Remove the pit in each of the two peaches. To remove the pits, ask an adult to help you carefully cut each peach in half, making sure you cut all the way down to (but not into) the pit. Use both hands to grab the halves of the peach, then twist the halves in opposite directions. Remove the pit.
3. Slice the peach halves further into bite-sized pieces.
4. Slice the ball of mozzarella into small pieces.
5. Arrange the tomatoes, peaches, mozzarella, and basil together on a large serving platter. You can keep the salad refrigerated until you're ready to serve it.
6. In a small bowl, whisk together the white balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, and olive oil. Season the dressing to taste with salt and pepper.
7. Drizzle the dressing over the salad right before serving. Makes 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

WEED WITHOUT CHEMICALS

When a plant grows where it's not supposed to, it's considered a weed. Weeds could be non-native plants that pop up in your vegetable garden, for example, and take resources (like water) from other plants. Instead of getting rid of weeds with pesticides, which can be harmful to the environment and animals, ask your family to consider using a more natural solution. For example, you can mix 1 gallon of white vinegar, 1 cup of salt, and 1 tablespoon of dish soap in a watering can and pour it on areas where you've seen weeds grow. Or you might choose to leave some weeds alone. Dandelions, for example, provide nectar for pollinators, especially bees.

A dandelion





How to...



FUN FACT

In the 1960s, golfer Arnold Palmer mixed iced tea and lemonade together, a drink that became known as an "Arnold Palmer."

Set up a lemonade stand

Serve refreshing drinks in your neighborhood for summertime fun.

Lemonade stands are a classic summer activity—kids have been creating them for more than 100 years. They're popular because they can help you learn about money, as well as how to advertise a business and work together with friends while having fun. Here's how to get started.

Mix up lemonade

The first step to hosting a great lemonade stand is making homemade lemonade. Start with this basic recipe: Mix together 1 cup of fresh-squeezed lemon juice, 1 cup of sugar, and 1½ quarts of cold water. Do a taste test, and add more water or sugar if necessary. Once you're satisfied, make a few batches and keep everything cool in the refrigerator until you're ready to open your stand. (Give the lemonade a stir before serving.) You could also consider making other treats, like freshly baked cookies or fruit skewers, to sell.

Scope out a spot

With an adult's supervision, find a table and put it in a visible but safe location, like in front of your home or, if you're permitted, in a local park. Cover the table with a tablecloth or craft paper. Next, make a sign with big letters that people can see if they're walking or driving by, and attach it to the front of your table. Then create a smaller sign with the menu and prices. On top of the table, you'll want to have a place



Make batches of lemonade in advance.

for your pitcher of lemonade and cups. You'll also need a jar or box for your earnings. You can also consider decorating your stand (see ideas at right).

Spread the word

Once you're set up, you can expect people who walk or drive by to stop to buy lemonade. Another way to attract customers is to put up more signs around your neighborhood. You could also ask an adult to invite family and friends or to post on their social pages to notify neighbors who live in the area and might want to come by. Be sure to have an adult with you at all times, and thank customers for stopping by.

Share the profits

When you're done for the day, count how much money you made. Before you do anything with it, make sure you ask an adult what your expenses were for the stand, like lemonade ingredients and cups, and offer to pay for those expenses. The amount left over is your profit. You can split this money among the friends who worked on the stand, or you could all decide to do something with it together. One option is to donate a portion or all of it to charity or a good cause of your choice. You can brainstorm local options, like an animal shelter or food pantry, or consider asking an adult to help you send the money to a national charity, like Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, which helps children with cancer.

4 DIY decorations for a super stand

These creative touches can help your lemonade business be a success.

Lemon balloons

Inflate yellow balloons, and tape a few "leaves" cut from green construction paper to the ends. Bunch the balloon "lemons" together and attach them to your stand.



Citrus garland

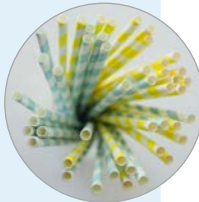
Cut a lemon into rounds with an adult's help. With their permission, bake



on a cookie sheet at 200° F for two to three hours until dried. Let cool. Use a sewing needle to thread slices on a long string. Hang in front of your stand.

Festive straws

A cup of old-fashioned paper straws with mini flags can be a fun addition to your table. Cut washi tape into 2-inch pieces. Write a saying on each (like "So sweet!") and wrap one around each straw.



Bouquet of flowers

With an adult's supervision, slice a lemon into rounds, then place the rounds inside a clear glass vase or jar. Add flowers and water to the vase, and place it on your stand.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

The popular carnival food cotton candy was originally called fairy floss when it was invented in 1897.



Make your own ring toss carnival game

What you need

- Two 4-packs of clear empty glass soda bottles, plus the cardboard carriers they came in (remove the labels from the bottles, then wash them and make sure they're completely dry inside)
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paper cup and a brush to mix paint
- Scissors
- Hot glue gun (optional)
- Decorative paper or plain paper and washi tape
- Double-stick tape or glue
- 6 wooden bangle bracelets or small embroidery hoops

Instructions

- Squeeze an inch or two of paint into the paper cup and add a few drops of water at a time, as necessary, to make the paint pourable. Mix well with the paintbrush.
- Pour the paint into a bottle and swirl it around to coat the inside. Turn the bottle upside down to drain the paint back into the cup. Repeat with the remaining bottles. (If you prefer, you can paint the outside of the bottles instead.)
- Use scissors to neatly cut off the handles on each of the cardboard carriers that the soda bottles came in. Line the two carriers up next to each other so you have two rows of four square sections. Have an adult help you hot-glue the two carriers together, or attach them with double-sided tape.
- Cut a piece of decorative paper large enough to wrap around the carrier. Cover the carrier with double-stick tape or glue and wrap the paper around it to cover it. (If you don't have decorative paper, you can use plain paper and decorate it with washi tape or stickers.)
- Use wooden bangles or the inside hoops from embroidery hoop sets for rings. (Optional: You can paint the rings different colors for each player.) Place the bottles in the container. Then gather together family or friends and start playing!



Enter The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest!

Do you love taking photos of flowers, trees, and wildlife? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest*. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-8-10 and 11- to 14-year-olds at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-11-14. Winning entries will be featured in a September 2023 issue of the magazine. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules.

The deadline to enter is July 31.





How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Skateboarding was invented when surfers wanted a way to practice their skills on land.

Give surfing a try

With a little preparation, you can experience this thrilling water sport.

Balancing on a surfboard while riding a wave may look intimidating, but even beginner surfers can become better with just a few days of practice. A good goal for your first surfing experience is to get a feel for how it works and to have fun so you'll want to do it again. Here's how to get started.

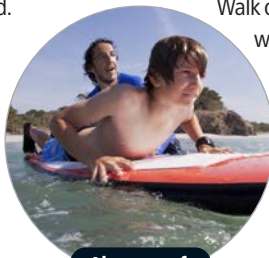
Get comfortable

Before you take out a surfboard, it's important to be a strong ocean swimmer. Practice swimming in the ocean with a family member and near a lifeguard.

Before getting on a surfboard, you might want to try a boogie board, a foam board that you rest your belly and chest on to ride waves. Boogie boarding is a good first step to help you get a feel for the waves and how they push you to shore.

Pick the right gear

As long as the water where you're surfing is warm enough to swim in, you don't need to invest in a full wetsuit as a beginner. Instead, you can wear a swim shirt—or "rash guard"—to protect your skin from irritation that happens when you lie on the board. (Don't forget sunscreen, too!) Foam-top surfboards are a great option for beginners because they're light and easier to paddle. They also come in smaller sizes for kids. You might be able to borrow one from a friend or rent one from a surf shop.



Always surf with an adult.

Find a good spot

You don't need big waves to start with. In fact, gentle waves are best for beginners. Consider going surfing at low tide and finding a spot where an adult who is with you can stand in case you need to hop off the board. Always surf near a lifeguard, and ask them where you're allowed to surf—it may be just outside the area designated for swimmers.

Catch a wave

Walk or paddle your board out to just beyond where the waves are breaking (or getting the white caps on them). Lie on your board and look for a wave in the distance. As it approaches, turn toward the shore and start paddling with your arms. (You can have an adult give you a gentle push.) When the wave catches up with you, you'll feel it propel you forward. Now you can stop paddling and let it carry you.

Practice standing

Once you've gotten the hang of catching a wave, you can try standing, called a "pop up." Place your palms flat on the front half of the board. Push down on the board to steady it, then hop up with your feet flat on the board. Keep a wide, stable stance while you balance and ride to shore. Standing will take practice, so be patient and consider working on your pop up on land, too.

4 spectacular surfing spots

These famous beach destinations offer some of the world's best waves.

Gold Coast, Australia

Located on the country's east coast, this area is known for its waves that break to the right of the person on the board, which is helpful for surfing.



Jeffreys Bay, South Africa

This beach town in South Africa is famous for its "supertube" waves, which can be the length of almost three football fields put together.



Bukit Peninsula, Bali, Indonesia

In the 1970s, the southernmost tip of Bali became the area's first famous surf destination. It has perfect waves for surfing almost every day from March to November.



Oahu, Hawaii

This area's pipelines, meaning waves that crash in a tube shape



that surfers can ride through, are considered the best in the world. The state of Hawaii is also the birthplace of modern surfing.



How to...

SKIP STONES ACROSS WATER

Skipping stones is a special way of throwing rocks so they appear to "skip" across the water's surface. Here's how it's done.

- 1. Find a good rock.** The best stones for skipping are mostly flat on the top and bottom and no bigger than the palm of your hand. They should also be light—about the weight of a tennis ball.
- 2. Grip it.** Hold the rock between your thumb and your middle finger. Your thumb should be on top, your middle finger on the bottom, and your index (or pointer) finger should wrap around the edge of the rock.
- 3. Get in position.** When you throw the rock, it needs to be spinning fast in order to repel off the water's surface. Stand by the water's edge and point the stone toward the water at a slight downward angle.
- 4. Let it spin.** Flick your wrist back and quickly fling the rock toward the water, pushing forward with your index finger so the rock spins as it moves. If it doesn't work the first time, keep trying—you'll get better with practice!



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

DID YOU KNOW?
A galette is a French pastry that's similar to a pie except the crust is free-form instead of baked in a special pie pan.

Bake up mini berry galettes

Ingredients

- 3 cups assorted berries, such as blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries
- 1 tablespoon potato starch
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ cup honey, divided
- 1 package store-bought refrigerated pie dough, such as Pillsbury brand
- ½ cup mascarpone cheese
- 1 egg
- Coarse sugar, for decorating (optional)

Instructions

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350° F. In a medium bowl, combine the berries, potato starch, lemon juice, and 2 tablespoons of the honey. Mix well. Set aside to soften for 15 minutes.
- 2.** Meanwhile, divide the dough into 4 equal pieces and form each into a ball with your hands. Roll the balls into roughly 8-inch rounds. Arrange rounds on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
- 3.** In a small bowl, mix the mascarpone and remaining 2 tablespoons of honey together. Divide the mixture among the four dough rounds, spreading it in the center and leaving a 1-inch border around.
- 4.** Using a slotted spoon, scoop up the berries and let the juices drain out. Then put the berries directly on top of the mascarpone on the dough rounds.
- 5.** Fold up the edges of the galettes, pinching the dough together to help it hold its shape. (Don't worry if the shapes are irregular.)
- 6.** In a small bowl, make an egg wash: Whisk the egg with 1 tablespoon of water. Gently brush the egg wash over the exposed dough edge and sprinkle lightly with coarse sugar, if desired. Bake the galettes until the filling is bubbling and the dough is golden brown, about 28 minutes.
- 7.** Let cool for 30 minutes before serving. Makes 4 individual galettes.



Enter The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest!

Do you love taking photos of flowers, trees, and wildlife? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's Nature Photo Contest*. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-8-10 and for 11- to 14-year-olds at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-11-14. Winning entries will be featured in a September 2023 issue of the magazine. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules.

The deadline to enter is July 31.





How to...

WOW!

The world's tallest sandcastle was built in Denmark in 2021 and stood 69.4 feet high.



Build an epic sandcastle

You can bring your beach creations to the next level with a few simple steps.

Making an awesome sandcastle might be on your to-do list this summer. All you need, in addition to sand, is a bucket, a shovel, and a plastic knife. Here are some tips for getting started.

Pick a good spot

At the beach, scope out a location to build your castle. Keep the changing tide in mind. You'll want it to be far enough from the water that it won't get hit by a wave while you're working but close enough that you won't be lugging buckets of water too far. You also may want to avoid high-traffic areas, like directly in front of a path that leads to the concession stand or the bathrooms.

Prep the sand

To make a castle, you're going to need plenty of wet sand. When sand gets wet, the liquid bonds each grain together so it can be molded into other shapes. Fill your large bucket with water about halfway, then add about the same amount of sand. Mix it together with your hands until all the sand feels very wet and has a similar consistency to cake batter.

Start building

One simple way to build an impressive sandcastle is to make a "drizzle castle." Pull a fistful of wet sand from your bucket and let it drizzle from your hand to build a spire. Repeat several times to make the spire bigger,

then start with a new spire and build several until you have a castle. If you want to make one tall castle, start by building a round base for support. Shovel sand to build a base about two to three feet wide, then smooth it into a round shape with your hands. Next, take a large handful of wet sand, form a flat pancake shape, and pat it down on your base. Stack several sand pancakes on top of one another to form towers. Keep adding wet sand and patting until you're happy with the basic shape of your castle. Take a break and let it dry a bit.



Start small and build up.

Carve the details

Carefully drag the back of a shovel to smooth the walls. Then, beginning at the top of the castle, use the plastic knife to carve details. You can draw several lines across a tower, then add vertical lines to make the sand walls look like bricks. You can also cut in circular windows or carve out steps to the castle. Be sure to carve slowly and carefully.

Add the final touches

You can leave your sandcastle just as it is or add a few flourishes. You can use what you find on the beach, such as shells to line the walls, a small piece of driftwood to create a bridge, or feathers to decorate the entrance. You can also add a colorful beachy touch with something you brought with you, like a pinwheel.

4 super sandcastle contests in the US

Professional sand artists—yes, that's a real thing!—show off their skills at these events each year.

Blue Water SandFest

This lakeside event in Port Huron, Michigan, includes expert sand sculpting as well as free lessons from top competitors.



Siesta Key Crystal Classic

This event on Florida's Gulf Coast lasts four days

and features 24 master sand sculptors who compete alone and in pairs. Spectators vote for the People's Choice Awards.

AIA Houston Sandcastle Competition

Competitors at this event in Houston, Texas, have a special edge—they are professional architects (people who design buildings).



Neptune's International Sandsculpting Championship

Some of the best sand sculptors from around the world come together to participate in this contest in Virginia Beach. Masterpieces on display include sand sculptures like that of author Mark Twain (above).

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); BLUE WATER SAND FEST; SIESTA KEY CRYSTAL CLASSIC; AIA HOUSTON SANDCASTLE COMPETITION; NEPTUNE'S INTERNATIONAL SANDSCULPTING CHAMPIONSHIP

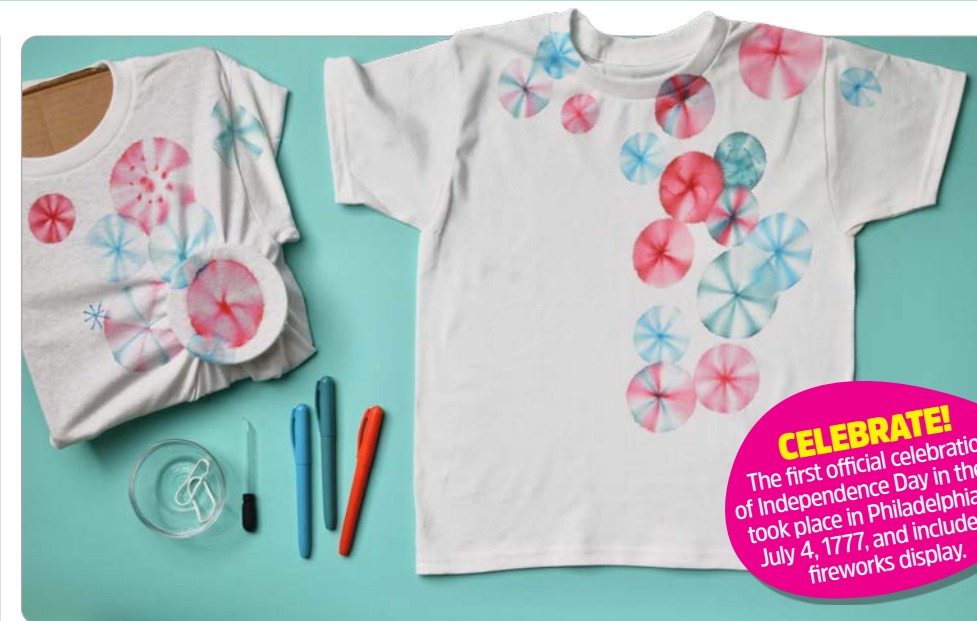


How to...

ROAST UP SOME TASTY S'MORES

This summertime dessert is easy to make and enjoy, whether you're camping or in the backyard.

- 1. Gather the ingredients.** Classic s'mores are made by sandwiching toasted marshmallow and a piece of milk chocolate between two graham crackers. If you'd like, you could also experiment with different chocolate candies, like a peanut butter cup.
- 2. Toast to perfection.** A campfire or a firepit is a great place to roast marshmallows. Always be sure to ask an adult's permission before approaching the fire. Push your marshmallow onto the tip of a long stick or thin wooden dowel, then hold it above the fire. Rotate the stick so the marshmallow melts evenly all the way around.
- 3. Sandwich it up.** When nicely toasted, place the marshmallow between the graham crackers and chocolate. Hold the graham crackers firmly around the marshmallow, then pull out your stick. Bite into your s'more and enjoy!



CELEBRATE!
The first official celebration of Independence Day in the US took place in Philadelphia on July 4, 1777, and included a fireworks display.

Tie-dye a fireworks T-shirt

What you need

- 100% cotton white T-shirt
- Scrap cardboard to fit inside shirt
- Embroidery hoop or glass bowls and rubber bands
- Permanent markers
- 91% isopropyl alcohol
- Eye or medicine dropper

Instructions

- 1.** Slide the cardboard inside the T-shirt so the ink doesn't bleed through to the back side. Place the front of the shirt into the embroidery hoop. If you don't have an embroidery hoop, slide one or more bowls, open side up, inside the shirt where you would like to add a firework. Tie those areas of fabric with a rubber band taut over the bowl.
- 2.** Draw an asterisk (an 'X' with another 'X' on top, like the one on the shirt shown above) with one or more colors of permanent marker. The lines can be straight or curvy.
- 3.** Before the marker sets or dries, use your dropper to drip five or more drops of alcohol onto the center of the asterisk. Keep dripping until you get the ink to bleed out as much as you would like.
- 4.** You can remove the embroidery hoop (or the rubber bands and bowls) and move them and repeat the above steps to add more fireworks.
- 5.** When the T-shirt is dry, place it in the dryer on high heat for 15 minutes to set the dye. Whenever it's time to launder it, wash it by hand or in cold water on a delicate cycle.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

BE A SUSTAINABLE SUMMER TOURIST

Summer can be an ideal time to visit new places and learn about the world around you. But when tourists travel to their destination, their actions can sometimes be harmful to the surrounding environment. Some tourists may litter, causing pollution, or they may not be respectful of local wildlife and plants. One way to be a responsible traveler is to simply follow local rules. Look out for posted signs or park literature for guidelines, like staying off beach dunes or not feeding animals. Put garbage in its proper place. It can also help to minimize use of a car, which can cause pollution. Encourage your family to walk, bike, or use public transportation as much as possible.

Follow basic rules to respect nature.





How to...

BRIGHT IDEA

In 1861, Scottish scientist James Clerk Maxwell took the first color photograph of a plaid ribbon.



Take pictures of nature

Learn to capture the natural beauty of the world around you.

Nature photography is about capturing natural elements of the outdoors, from wildlife to plants to weather. It can be done anywhere, with a camera or with your phone. "Nature photography is an amazing tool that you can use to capture and share what's important to you," professional nature photographer Jesse Burke told *The Week Junior*. Here's how to get started.

Choose a setting

First, decide where you want to take nature photos. If you're a beginner, you can start in your own neighborhood or in a local park. You can plan to shoot local wildlife, like birds or squirrels, or magnificent trees. As you get more experience, you can use what you learn when you visit other natural settings, like a state or national park. Try to tell a story with your photos, suggests Burke. In addition to taking photos of the overall scenery and the wildlife you see, you can shoot close-ups of other natural wonders, like a flower in bloom. "When you look at all the pictures together later, you get a richer narrative," says Burke.

Take photos in the best light

When taking photos outside, you'll always be working with the natural light that comes from the sun. Two of the best times to shoot are the "golden hours" each day—just after the sun rises and right before it sets. This is

when the sun casts a natural, gentle glow that's ideal for photographs. Anytime you shoot outside, keep the sun's position over your subject in mind, says Burke. For example, if you want to get a shot of an animal in front of a landscape, you should have the sun to your back so the light is shining on your subject.

Frame your shots

Decide what you want to see inside the frame of your shot and also consider what you don't want to see, says

Burke—like an object in the way. When you're about to take a photo, look through the viewfinder of your camera or on the screen of your smartphone. Turn your camera a little to the right, then to the left. Observe how this changes the shot and whether one side looks better. You can also experiment with angles, like pointing your camera toward the ground or up to the sky.

Keep experimenting

The best way you can become a stronger nature photographer is to practice, Burke told *The Week Junior*. If you want to learn more technical skills, like mastering your camera settings, you might consider taking a photography class. Ask an adult to help you check with your school or a local art center. Or you could consider taking an online photography course from a website like [outschool.com](https://www.outschool.com) or [khanacademy.com](https://www.khanacademy.com).



Try different camera angles.

Meet our photo contest judges

These inspiring photographers will be helping to judge entries for *The Week Junior's* Nature Photo Contest. See the contest details at right!

Jesse Burke

He uses his work to tell the story of the relationship between people and nature. He is known for his photos that document the road trips he takes to introduce his three daughters to the joy of the outdoors. See his work at jesseburke.com.



Angela Ledyard

She was inspired to try photography at a young age when her grandfather showed her how to use his camera. Today, the landscape and nature photographer specializes in taking super close-ups and using tools like drones to capture sweeping overhead views. See her work at angelaledyard.com.



Ami Vitale

In her work as a photographer, filmmaker, and writer, she has traveled to more than 100 countries. She views her work, which sheds light on human and environmental injustices, as a tool to create awareness around the world. She is considered one of the most influential conservation photographers today. See her work at amivitale.com.



GETTY IMAGES (2); JESSE BURKE; ANGELA LEDYARD; AMI VITALE

Contest



Enter our Nature Photo Contest!



The winning images from last year's Nature Photo Contest appeared in the magazine.

Do you love taking photographs of the natural world? Are you always looking to capture the amazing beauty of plants, flowers, trees, and wildlife when you're outdoors? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's* third annual Nature Photo Contest.

The deadline to enter is July 31!

How to enter

- **Consider the judging criteria.** Submissions will be judged on quality (clear, well-composed photographs that aren't blurry), originality (the use of creativity and imagination through the camera lens), and how well they reflect the nature theme and *The Week Junior*.
- **Choose one photo to enter.** Only one photograph per entrant is allowed.
- **Fill out an entry form.** With a parent, complete an entry form and submit it by July 31, 2023.
- **Enter the correct age group category.** Children ages 8 to 10 will be judged in one category. Children ages 11 to 14 will be judged in another category. Winners will be selected from each category. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-8-10. The entry form for 11- to 14-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2023PhotoContest-11-14.

NO PURCHASE OR SUBSCRIPTION NECESSARY. Open to legal residents of US, DC, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, 8–14 years. Professional artists are not eligible. Ends 11:59:59 pm ET 7/31/2023. Void where prohibited. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules. Sponsor: Future US LLC.

The judges

The Nature Photo Contest will be judged by Editor-in-Chief Andrea Barbalich, Creative Director Dean Abatemarco, and Photo Editors Nataki Hewling and Lily Alt. Entries will also be judged by three award-winning professional photographers: Jesse Burke, Angela Ledyard, and Ami Vitale (see their bios at left).

The prize

The winning entries will be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Week Junior*.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

In a recent national survey, 93% of kids said their favorite book was one they picked out themselves.

Choose books you'll love

Make the most of summer reading with books you're likely to treasure.

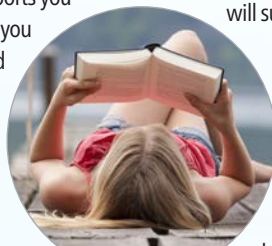
Summer is a great time to read because it's all about choosing the books *you* want to immerse yourself in. With so many options, though, it can be hard to decide which books are right for you. Here's how to pick the ones you're more likely to enjoy.

Pick a genre

Thinking about stories you've enjoyed in the past can give you clues about what genres (categories) you prefer. Maybe you like fantasy fiction, which transports you to completely made-up worlds. Or perhaps you like historical fiction, made-up stories based on true events. Nonfiction is another option. Think about the topics that interest you, like a sport you love, a pop culture icon you admire, or an interest you have and want to know more about.

Ask for recommendations

After you've figured out what genres you like, you can start seeking suggestions for books to read. Visit the library and ask a librarian to guide you to the shelves that feature the genre you'd like to dive into. Another idea is to ask friends with similar tastes what books they have liked and would recommend. You can find a list of 50 recommendations from different genres at kids.theweekjunior.com/summerofreading and take the Summer of Reading challenge (see form at right).



Read what and where you like.

Search for "readalikes"

If you enjoyed a particular book, you may appreciate others that are similar in style, known as a "readalike." Look up an author whose book you liked in the past, and find out whether they have written sequels or other books you might enjoy. If you have read through an entire series and are looking for new authors, you can check out the site gnooks.com. You can put in the names of three authors you admire, and the site's search engine will suggest similar authors to check out.

Keep a list

As you're coming up with book ideas, write them down or save them in a note-taking app on your phone or tablet. When you have three to five books, pick one to read. If you still need help deciding, you can often read a few pages of the book for free on Amazon. You can also go to the site goodreads.com to check out other readers' reviews.

Take the pressure off

You won't love every book you read, and that's OK! No matter how far along you are in the book you are reading, if you don't like it, it's fine to stop reading it. When you take the pressure off yourself to finish a book you're not enjoying, you free yourself up to choose another book, which could be your next favorite.

Make the most of your local library

Libraries are for more than reading. Here are a few of the other things you might be able to do at a local branch.

Get tickets

Many libraries offer free or discounted tickets to zoos, aquariums, museums, and baseball games.



Take home tech

Libraries may lend tablets, chargers, and more.

The Brooklyn Public Library in

New York loans out laptops to kids ages 13 and up.

Learn a hobby

Many libraries offer special classes, from knitting to photography. Some work with local astronomy clubs to loan out telescopes for stargazing.



Check out gear

There are libraries that loan out gear for outdoor fun, from hiking boots to backpacks to camping tents.

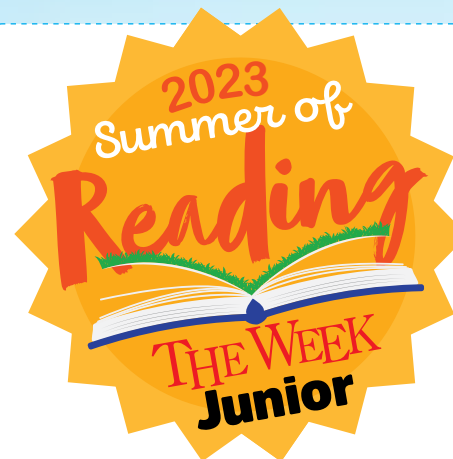


Play games

Many libraries have games, including puzzles and board games, on-site. Some also have workshops to help kids learn how to play chess. They may also host tournaments.



SHUTTERSTOCK: GETTY IMAGES (6); ON RIGHT PAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK



Join *The Week Junior's* Summer of Reading challenge!

Just read three books this summer (any books you like!) and tell us what you think of them.

First name _____

Age _____ State _____

Parent/guardian's email _____

Book #1

Title _____

Author _____

Rating  (one is the lowest, three is the highest)

Your review in three words _____

Your longer review if you wish _____

Book #2

Title _____

Author _____

Rating  (one is the lowest, three is the highest)

Your review in three words _____

Your longer review if you wish _____

Book #3

Title _____

Author _____

Rating  (one is the lowest, three is the highest)

Your review in three words _____

Your longer review if you wish _____

Take our challenge!

Fill out this form and have an adult upload it to tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ReadingChallenge. When you do, you will be entered in our sweepstakes for a chance to win books and a personal video call with one of our Author Ambassadors. Five winners will be drawn at random. The deadline is Friday, August 11. For complete rules, go to theweekjunior.com/terms.

Parent/guardian's name _____

I am the parent/legal guardian of _____

I have read *The Week Junior* privacy policy and consent to allow my child to enter the Summer of Reading Sweepstakes.

Parent/guardian's signature _____



Find out more and get extra forms at kids.theweekjunior.com/summerofreading.



How to...



Give roller skating a try

Get ready to enjoy exciting new adventures on wheels.

Roller skating is good exercise, builds balance, improves your mental focus, and boosts your confidence. You can skate around a roller rink to pop tunes or roll through a local park enjoying the outdoors. Here's how to get started.

Put on your gear

You can head to a local roller rink, which should have all the gear you need, including skates, a helmet, and pads, to rent for a small fee. (The helmet and pads—like wrist guards, knee pads, and elbow pads—help protect you if you fall while learning.) Nearly all rinks today offer two kinds of skates: quads and inline skates (also called rollerblades). Quads are traditional skates, with two pairs of two wheels in the front and back. They can be ideal beginner skates for kids because they're easier to maneuver. Later, you might try inline skates, which have a single row of wheels and are designed to pick up speed.



Practice the "ready" position

Start simply. Practice standing on your skates. Pick a bench outside the rink. From a sitting position, use your hands to push off and stand up. Grab onto something, if needed, until you get your balance. Then sit back down and try it again a few times. Once you feel comfortable standing on your skates, you can practice getting into

the "ready" position. This position helps you stay balanced while standing and is where you'll start from before you roll forward. To get in ready position, stand up straight with your feet a hand's-width apart, bend your knees slightly, and lean forward a little.

Start rolling

Once you've got the hang of the ready position, it's time to start moving. Adjust your feet so your heels are pointed inward and your toes are pointed out. (It should look like you could have a slice of pizza between your feet.) Begin by "marching" on your skates—pick up one foot and move it forward, then move the other foot forward, keeping your toes turned outward. As you march, your wheels will start to glide forward. Allow yourself to slowly glide farther and faster, keeping your knees bent. You can stretch your arms outward for extra help with balance.

Master stopping

Learning how to stop is as important as learning how to roll. Your quads may have a brake that looks like a round rubber cylinder under the toe, while braking systems on inline skates vary. Go slow while you practice so you can get a feel for how much pressure you need to apply in order to stop. This can be tricky at first but will get easier with practice.

4 more skating sports to check out

Once you know the basics, you might be interested in one of these activities on wheels.

Roller hockey

Sometimes called street hockey, this sport is played at a roller rink or outside. Two teams face off using sticks and pucks to score goals.



Artistic skating



Similar to figure skating on ice, artistic roller skating is

when people perform choreographed routines to music while on roller skates. Routines can include tricks like spins and jumps.

Speed skating

Athletes on inline skates race around a track to see who can cover a certain distance in the shortest amount of time. Many people compete in both roller-skating and ice-skating events, as the sports are similar.



Roller derby



This is a contact sport with two teams of five skaters. One skater (who wears a star on their helmet) tries to lap the other team's skaters in order to earn points, while the other players try to block them.



How to...

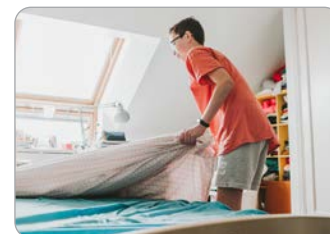
MAKE YOUR BED IN THE MORNING

You can keep your room tidy and also sleep more soundly at night after you climb into a neatly made bed. Here's how.

1. Start with clean sheets. Pull a corner of a fitted sheet (the one with elastic on each corner) over one of the upper corners of your mattress and tuck it underneath. Repeat with the other three corners of the bed, smoothing out the sheet in between. Place the top sheet evenly over the bottom sheet, and neatly tuck it under the mattress at the foot of your bed and along the sides.

2. Add some layers. Next, place a light blanket on the bed. Drape it evenly, then tuck it under the mattress at the foot and sides. Next, you can top it with your comforter or a decorative quilt. Instead of tucking it in, hang it over the sides of your bed evenly.

3. Arrange your pillows. Slide your pillows into fresh pillowcases and put them at the head of your bed. Add decorative items, like throw pillows or stuffed animals, to put the finishing touches on your cozy sleep space.



Mix up caramelized onion dip

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 yellow onions, finely chopped
- Pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 cup sour cream
- Minced chives, for serving
- Vegetables or potato chips, for serving

Instructions

1. In a large skillet over medium heat, combine the butter and olive oil and cook until the butter melts.
2. Add the chopped onions and a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring often, until the onions are deeply golden brown and caramelized, about 25 minutes.
3. Stir in the balsamic vinegar, scraping the bottom of the pan with a spoon. Take the mixture off the heat and carefully set aside on another burner. Let cool.
4. In a large bowl, add the cream cheese and sour cream and mix well. Stir in the onion mixture until evenly combined throughout.
5. Transfer the dip to a serving bowl and sprinkle with chives. Serve with veggies or potato chips (or both) for dipping. Makes about 2 cups of dip.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

ORGANIZE A GROUP CLEANUP

Litter—like discarded boxes, bags, or other trash—is not only unsightly but harmful to the environment. If animals accidentally eat trash, it can make them sick, and garbage that ends up in waterways can cause pollution. You can help by organizing a community cleanup, whether at a nearby playground or a beach. With an adult's help, pick a date, invite friends, and post fliers to spread the word. Include the time and place to meet, and ask everyone to bring garbage bags and gloves. On the day of the cleanup, remind volunteers to be safe and let adults pick up anything sharp. When it's time to wrap up, remember to thank everyone for volunteering.



Everyone can pitch in.



How to...



MOVIE MAGIC
The 1937 Disney movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was the first full-length animated feature film.

Give animation a try

This fun hobby will bring your storytelling and drawing skills to life.

Animation is when drawings are shown in a quick series so they appear to be moving. It has existed since the 1800s and was originally done only by hand. Today, many animated films and shows are created with help from computer programs. Animation combines activities you might already enjoy, like storytelling and making art. If you'd like to try it, here's how to get started.

Learn the basics on paper

You can get a feel for how animation works by making a paper flip book. This is a small stack of drawings (called "frames" in animation) that appear to be moving when you quickly flip through them. First, grab a small sticky notepad or blank pad of paper and a pencil. Go to the last page and draw a simple image, like a stick figure or ball. Then work backward to the front of the pad, drawing the same image on each page with a small change. For example, your stick figure could be taking a step, or your ball could be bouncing. When you're done, quickly thumb through the pages to see your drawings move.



Make a flip book.

Bring toys to life

Another type of animation to try is stop-motion. This method uses physical objects, like action figures or clay, to simulate movement. To begin, you can choose something to animate. For example, you could show a

Lego set in the process of being built or have two superhero figures interacting. On a table, prop up a camera from a smartphone or tablet. Place your toys in front of the camera and take a picture. Next, move them very slightly and take another picture. Repeat until you have at least 30 photos. You can then use an app like iMovie to stitch the pictures together and play them as a single video clip.

Explore technical tools

Professional animators use computers in their work. They may draw an original character on a drawing tablet with a stylus pen, then use animation software to make their character move and talk. There are several apps that will give you an idea of how computer programs animate scenes. A few examples are *Animate Me: Kids*, *Toca Life World: Build a Story*, and *GoldieBlox & the Movie Machine*. You can use them to turn your illustrations into an animated film.

Take a class

When you're ready to move beyond beginner basics, explore taking a class with an experienced animation instructor. Check after-school programs, art museums, and recreation centers for animation courses. There are also classes you can take online through websites like outschool.com and khanacademy.org.

4 fun facts about animated movies

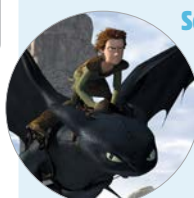
Find out what inspired some of the scenes in popular animated films.

Family connection

Animators working on *Moana* partially based Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson's character Maui on Johnson's real-life grandfather.



Soaring high

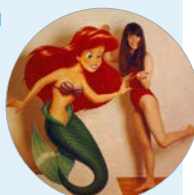


During the making of *How to Train Your Dragon*, the animators

behind the scenes attended flight school. They used what they learned to make the flying dragon scenes as realistic as possible.

Under the sea

Some of the characters in *The Little Mermaid* are based on real people. For example, animators sketched Ariel based on an actress performing her scenes.



Hidden mice

In many Disney films, animators hide images of the original Disney character Mickey Mouse. For example, in *Encanto* there are hidden cactus plants in the shape of Mickey's ears.



How to...

ORGANIZE YOUR DIGITAL PHOTOS

Putting digital photos in order can help you find specific pictures when you need them. It's also a fun way to revisit memories. Here's how to begin.

- 1. Gather photos.** Download photos from your family's phones, tablets, or digital cameras onto a computer. Then click through and delete any duplicates or blurry images.
- 2. Arrange by date.** Once you've eliminated pictures you don't need, sort photos into digital folders by year. Within the folders you can make subfolders labeled by month. This way, if you want to find pictures from last year's school play or your most recent birthday party, you'll know where to start looking.
- 3. Print your favorites.** Although it's convenient to have photos on a device, it's also nice to have printed photos around to remind you of fun times with friends or family. You could print out enough to fill a photo album for each school year or print a few to display in frames.



DID YOU KNOW?
About 85% of carrots grown in the US are from California.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife, food processor, or oven.

Make roasted carrot "fries" with feta dip

Ingredients

- 1 pound rainbow carrots, peeled
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 6 ounces feta cheese, in a block or crumbled
- ½ cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
- 1 clove garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 400° F. Cut the carrots into uniform "fries" 3 to 4 inches long. Toss the carrots in the olive oil and arrange them on a baking sheet in a single layer.
- 2.** Sprinkle carrots generously with salt and roast in the oven until tender, about 10 minutes. Flip carrots, and cook another 10 minutes.
- 3.** Meanwhile, prepare the feta dip: Combine the feta cheese, yogurt, garlic, lemon juice, and zest in a food processor and puree until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 4.** Put the feta dip into a bowl. Serve it with the carrot fries for dipping. Makes about 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK COOL YOUR HOME MORE NATURALLY

As summer approaches and the weather heats up, your family may be tempted to crank up the air conditioning. But air conditioning uses a lot of electricity, which can be harmful to the environment because it depletes natural resources and causes pollution. One solution is to try natural ways to cool your home so you can run the air conditioning less frequently. During cooler afternoons and at night, open windows to bring in a breeze. On hot days, try to avoid using appliances that generate heat. For example, instead of turning on the oven, talk with your family about making no-cook meals. Rather than running towels in the clothes dryer, hang them on a line to dry in the sun.

Open windows for cool breezes.





How to...



Write your own songs

Follow these steps to express your thoughts and feelings in tunes and lyrics.

Songwriting is an art where you write the lyrics (words) to a song and set them to music. Whether you simply enjoy music or are looking for a creative way to tell a story, it can be a great activity to try. You can use your imagination or draw from personal experiences to create a song. Here's how to get started.

Brainstorm themes

Begin by jotting down ideas for a song in a notebook or a note-taking app. Start with a theme. This could be anything from a friendship to a river you like to sit by to how you feel about summer camp. Once you have a theme, you could write down different words and phrases that are related to the theme. Later, you can draw from this word list as you work on your lyrics. As for a title, some songwriters jot down ideas for a song's name right away, while others wait until the lyrics have been finalized.



Consider the structure

Many popular songs are written to include specific elements, such as an introduction, verses, chorus, and a bridge. An introduction is a few lines of lyrics that begin the song. A verse is a new set of lyrics that tell the song's story. After each verse, you could have a chorus, which is a set of lyrics and music that are repeated throughout the song. Toward the end of the song, you could add a

bridge, which is a musical passage that connects two sections of a song, such as the final verse and chorus. A bridge should vary in melody from the rest of your song to help add contrast. It can have lyrics but doesn't have to.

Come up with the lyrics

After you've thought about a basic structure, use your word list to write lyrics. As you write, say or sing the words out loud and consider how they sound. Do the verses flow easily? Does what you're trying to express make sense? Consider using catchy writing techniques like alliteration (words that start with the same letter) or rhyming (words that repeat the same ending sound) to help your lyrics flow together.

Set the words to music

Once you've written the lyrics, you're ready to put them to music. If you or a friend plays an instrument, like the guitar or piano, you could work on a simple tune to set your lyrics to. One way to do this is to take a song you already know how to play and start adjusting it to go with your own lyrics. Another option is to sing your lyrics against a wordless music track. (You might have one in your own music collection, or you can find one on YouTube.) Lastly, you could ask an adult to help you use an app like Songify to set your words to music. Once you have a complete song, rehearse it and perform it for family and friends!

4 pop stars who sing and write

Not all musical artists write the songs they perform. These singer-songwriters do.

Taylor Swift

When Taylor Swift was a freshman, she wrote "Our Song" for her high school talent show. Later, it was the number-one country song in the US for six straight weeks.



Lionel Richie



Writing songs for himself and others is a major part of Lionel Richie's career.

For example, he co-wrote "We Are the World," which many artists sang together to help raise millions of dollars for famine relief in Africa.

Mariah Carey

After writing her first hit at age 17, Mariah Carey went on to hold the record for the most weeks in the number-one spot on the music charts as a songwriter. Her hit songs combined have spent 77 weeks in the top spot.



Billie Eilish



For Billie Eilish, who is famous for popular songs such as "Bad Guy,"

musical talent runs in the family. She has co-written most of her music with her older brother, Finneas.

How to...



PRESS SPRING FLOWERS

Flower pressing is an art in which flowers are flattened and dried. They can then be used as a memento of spring or as decorations for another craft. Follow these easy steps.

- 1. Gather blooms.** Pick flowers from your yard or a field that have already bloomed or are about to bloom. (Be sure you have permission to pick them.) Flowers with flat petals—like pansies, geraniums, and flowering weeds—work best.
- 2. Arrange and press.** Gently dry wet flowers with a towel. Choose a heavy book and open it to a page toward the middle. Place a piece of scrap paper on a single page, then arrange your flower on top of it. Place another piece of scrap paper on top of the flower, then close the book. Stack more books on top.
- 3. Be patient.** Pressing flowers takes time. Leave them inside the book for about a week, then open it up and check them. If they feel dry, remove them. If not, replace the paper and press the flowers for another week.



Whip up no-bake cheesecake bars

Ingredients

- 12 large graham crackers
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, melted
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, at room temperature
- ¾ cup confectioners' sugar
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Whipped cream, for garnish (optional)
- Lemon slices, for garnish (optional)

Instructions

1. Line an 8-inch baking dish with parchment paper, letting the paper hang over the edges.
2. Make graham cracker crumbs for the crust: Break the crackers into medium-sized pieces and place them in a food processor. With the lid on, run the food processor until the crackers are fine crumbs. Or, instead of using a food processor, place graham crackers in a zip-top plastic bag, then use a rolling pin to crush them into crumbs.
3. In a large bowl, combine 1½ cups of the crumbs, melted butter, and granulated sugar. Press the mixture into the bottom of the pan. Use the back of a measuring cup to make a smooth layer. Refrigerate 1 hour.
4. In a food processor, combine the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar, lemon juice, lemon zest, and vanilla. Process until smooth. Pour the mixture into the pan and smooth the top with the back of a spoon.
5. Refrigerate until set, about 3 hours. Lift the parchment by the edges to remove the bars from the pan. Slice into squares with a knife. If you like, garnish each bar with whipped cream and a lemon slice.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

UPCYCLE OLD GREETING CARDS

You and your family can help keep old greeting cards out of landfills by recycling them. But some cards can't be recycled. These include cards that play music, have details like bows or glitter, or are made with glossy photo paper. You can still upcycle them, though, by finding new uses for them. For example, you can cut out letters and images of balloons, cake, or flowers and make new, personalized cards for friends by gluing the images onto recycled paper. Another way to reuse old cards is to cut them up and add them as part of a collage. You can also string favorite images from cards together and hang them up as a wall decoration.





How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Sailing first appeared in the Olympic Games in 1900 in Paris, France.



Give sailing a try

Experience the water in a whole new way with this adventurous sport.

More than 3 million people in the US sail each year. With some lessons and practice, you could be one of them. Sailing a boat is great exercise, can be enjoyed with family or friends, and is a new adventure every time. You don't need to live near the ocean or another large body of water to learn—there are sailing programs, many on small lakes or bays, in all 50 states. Lessons are also offered in many vacation spots. Here's how to get started.

Understand the basics

When you're starting out in sailing, you'll likely begin on a small dinghy made for kids or for one or two people. It operates like any sailboat—with sails to catch the wind and propel the boat forward. The sailor, the person operating the boat, has to be able to move the sails, as well as use a rudder (a fin or blade at the rear or under the boat) in order to direct the boat where they want it to go.

Find sailing near you

The most important lesson you can learn in sailing is how to do it safely, under the guidance of experienced sailing instructors. Youth sailing programs throughout the US typically offer lessons and summer camps. Find sailing clubs and search for youth lessons near you at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-sail. Then check their websites or ask

an adult to call them to find out what lessons or camps they recommend for kids in your age group.

Prepare for your lesson

As a beginner sailor, your lesson will start on land. You can expect to learn a few basic knots used for tying ropes on the boat, plus how to get the boat ready to sail and into the water. You'll learn technical skills, like how to raise the sails by pulling on the lines attached to them. The lesson should also provide most of

what you need to sail, including the boat and a life vest. Ask what type of shoes you should wear, and dress in clothes that will dry easily.

Stay safe

Remember to always wear your life vest on or near water, even when you're on the dock. Don't go near a boat or take one out without an adult's permission, and never sail or swim alone.

Get more out of it

Once you've learned sailing, there's so much you can do with your new hobby. You can sail to have fun or to pursue it as a sport. Many sailing clubs hold racing competitions, or they might have a team you can join that travels to events in your area.



Sailing can be a social activity.

4 ways to stay safe in the sun

It's important to be mindful of sun exposure when sailing, since reflection from the water makes the sun's rays stronger.

Apply sunscreen

Put on broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher at least 15 minutes before going outside. Reapply as directed.



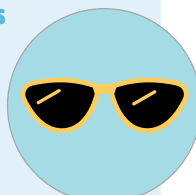
Cover up

Lightweight clothing can help block the sun too. Just make sure you can't

see your hand through it. (You may still get burned through sheer fabrics.) Baseball caps or wide-brimmed hats can also help protect your face.

Shield your eyes

You also need to protect your eyes from ultraviolet rays. Make sure your sunglasses come with a label that says they block UV rays, and always wear them in the sun.



Keep hydrated

Your body can lose water quickly from sweating

when it's hot outside, so be sure to drink plenty of water before you go sailing and fill a large water bottle to bring with you.



How to...



CLEAN THE BATHROOM

Keeping your home's bathroom clean is an important chore that should be done weekly. Here's how to do it efficiently.

- 1. Clear out clutter.** Recycle empty shampoo bottles, put items away in drawers, and empty the trash and clothes hamper. You'll also want to take towels to the laundry.
- 2. Work top to bottom.** Dust shelves and countertops with a dry microfiber cloth, starting with the highest surfaces and moving down. (This will keep dirt from falling on areas you've already cleaned.) Do the same in your shower and toilet areas. Next, spray surfaces with a bathroom cleaner and wipe dry. An adult can help you use a stronger disinfectant spray on particularly dirty spots like the toilet.
- 3. Wipe down glass.** Use a glass cleaner to spritz mirrors and other glass surfaces (like a shower door), and wipe with a microfiber or lint-free cloth. Repeat on anything else that you might want to shine up, like faucets or knobs. Put out fresh towels, and enjoy your sparkling clean space.



WOW!

The United States Postal Service processes and delivers more than 420 million pieces of mail every day.

Make recycled-paper envelopes

What you need

- 1 or more used envelopes to use as templates
- Pencil
- Newspaper, wrapping paper, sheet music, or any used colorful printed paper
- Scissors
- Glue stick (or white glue and a paintbrush to apply it)
- Adhesive labels or stickers (optional)

Instructions

- Carefully open an envelope to create a template. Open up the top flap, then gently separate the two seams that create the pocket of the envelope. You should now have a flat template, which is square or rectangular in the middle and has a triangular flap off the top, bottom, and each side.
- Position your template over your choice of colorful paper, making sure that the image or pattern on the paper will line up where you'd like it to be. Trace the template onto your paper with a pencil, then cut out the shape with scissors.
- Fold your paper into an envelope, following the folds on your envelope template. Use a glue stick to glue three of the sides together, leaving one flap that opens and closes for inserting a letter.
- Once you add your card or letter to the envelope, use the glue stick or a sticker to seal it shut.
- If you want to address your envelope to someone and it is very patterned and busy, you can add a plain white mailing label to the outside of the envelope and write the address on that.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK GROW PLANTS TO HELP BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies are important to the environment because they are pollinators. These insects drink nectar from flowers, collecting pollen and spreading it as they flutter from plant to plant. This helps plants—and fruits and vegetables—to grow. However, butterflies are under threat from habitat loss, climate change, and pesticides. One way you can help is to grow plants and flowers that attract butterflies. Pick a sunny area, and plant a mix of host plants and nectar plants. Host plants, where butterflies lay their eggs, include milkweed and parsley. Nectar plants are typically wildflowers that butterflies like to feast on, like aster, echinacea, and black-eyed Susans.

A monarch feeding on milkweed





How to...

BE A FRIEND TO BEES



By Andrew, 12, Virginia
Bees pollinate about 75% of the fruits, nuts, and vegetables grown in the US. Despite this, bees are losing their habitat and are at risk of going extinct.

The good news is you can help. By planting native plants, you can replace bees' lost habitat. Here's how to get started.

Identify where you could grow native plants. You can plant a flower garden in the ground or in containers. For smaller spaces, you can use windowsill plant trays or planter pots designed for stoops, patios, or balconies. Another idea is to ask an adult to help you identify an appropriate place to tend a garden outside your home. Look for community garden plots near you. Finally, helping friends or grandparents plant and maintain their own gardens with native plants is another way to be a friend to bees.



Plant seeds. Ask an adult to help you buy seeds for flowering plants that are native to your area. Whether you're starting with a tray or a pot to grow your seeds, use soil that is made for starting seeds. You can also make your own by combining 2 parts peat moss and 1 part of perlite or vermiculite. Place the seed just under the surface of the soil and water it. Give the seed access to sunlight, and water daily. Watch the plant grow and, if needed, replant it in a bigger pot or area. Watch bees pollinate the plants.

Care for your garden. Continue to water your flowers as necessary. Do not use pesticides, which are very harmful to bees. Pesticides can disrupt learning and memory, which can cause a bee to forget where its hive is and ultimately die. Insects aren't the only ones affected. Pesticides can also be harmful to humans and other animals.

HOLD FUNDRAISING DRIVES TO SUPPORT ANIMAL SHELTERS



By Nishka, 11, Virginia
Contributing to a drive for pet supplies in your school or local area—or starting a drive—can be a great way to support your nearest animal shelter.

"We have a lot of young people who contact us to volunteer," said Gina Lynch of the Humane Society of Fairfax County, Virginia. She notes that while many children may be too young to volunteer in shelters, collecting food and supplies for the animals is something kids of all ages can do. "A lot of shelters can't afford to buy new items," she said. Here's how you can start collecting items they need.

Check with your local shelter to find out their needs. Remember to ask if they have restrictions on donations they accept. "We ask people to avoid donating cat toys with feathers," Lynch said. "They can get stuck in cats' mouths."



According to Lynch, helpful items typically include food, treats, toys, beds, blankets, and old sheets and towels. "If a cat or a dog falls in love with a certain blanket or bed, we send it home with them when they get adopted so they can have familiar surroundings," Lynch said.

Choose a date, time, and collection spot. Working with a parent, teacher, or scout leader, determine the best day or several days to hold your drive and where to have collection sites. For example, a local grocery store may let you keep a collection box near the entrance.

Get the word out. Make posters and flyers to distribute so more people know about the drive. Work with other volunteers to divide up the task of posting the flyers around town.

LEARN HOW LAWS PROTECT ANIMALS



By Oliver, 11, California
Many animals are threatened by habitat destruction, but laws can help protect their homes. A recent example is the passage of a federal regulation (government rule) that protects the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. The Tongass is the largest temperate rainforest in the world, spanning nearly 17 million acres. (A temperate rainforest is a forest where there is a lot of rain and moderate temperatures ranging between 32° F to 68° F.)

Animals in the Tongass benefit from the law because it protects the ancient forest from having roads built through it and prevents the logging of trees. This law saves trees that are hundreds of years old and are home to many wild animals.

Some of the animals in the Tongass that benefit from the protection include the Sitka black-tailed deer, which is a small brown-gray deer with a black tail. Its population is about 200,000. Another one is the coastal black bear. Adult coastal black bears are up to six feet tall and can weigh 180 to 200 pounds. They benefit the environment by dispersing seeds they eat, which helps to increase the plant population. Another animal that is expected to thrive is the marten, which is a long, weasel-like mammal that weighs up to four pounds. Martens have struggled to grow their population due to over-trapping and commercial logging.

Gregory Dunn, a wildlife biologist with the US Forest Service, said laws like the one protecting the Tongass are important to these amazing animals and to the future generations of people who will be able to enjoy them. If you want to help more of these laws get written and passed, Dunn said, you can contact your state lawmakers or your mayor to tell them about your ideas and your concerns about animals. One website where you can find your local lawmakers is openstates.org/find_your_legislator/.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY LORENA RAYOVA



How to...

ADVOCATE FOR SCHOOLS TO HAVE THERAPY DOGS



By Shrey, 10, Massachusetts
When I had anxiety, my dog, Ollie, helped me overcome it with his constant affection.

This experience led me to believe that having therapy dogs at school might benefit children dealing with daily stresses, anxieties, and grief.

Therapy dogs are trained to provide comfort and support to people, and they often work in schools, hospitals, and retirement homes. They can be integrated in various ways. At some schools, therapy dogs live permanently with a staff member who brings the dog to work with them. These dogs can become permanent



members of the school! Schools can also work with local organizations that bring in a therapy dog for certain classes or counseling sessions.

Recently, I met with my school principal to propose a therapy dog program for my school. If you would like to advocate for getting a therapy dog at your school, here are three facts you can share with administrators.

Therapy dogs can boost children's mental health. During a school day, children may be managing many different priorities, which often can result in feelings of stress and anxiety. Therapy dogs can help students feel less overwhelmed and more focused.

Student behavior may improve after spending time with a therapy dog.

Elementary schools in Colorado and Massachusetts that implemented a therapy dog program reported that they have since observed more healthy behaviors in their students. Attention spans improved, and happiness levels increased.

Organizations are ready to help. There are several trusted groups that train therapy dogs to go into schools. The Alliance of Therapy Dogs and Assistance Dogs International are two good resources to turn to. They have more information about how therapy dogs are trained to work in the classroom with children.

TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS TO RAISE ANIMAL AWARENESS



By Madison, 11, Minnesota
You can help animals just by taking pictures of them. Brian Skerry, a photojournalist and film producer for *National Geographic*, said that capturing animals in photos or on video can help people realize that they aren't that different from us. Viewing these images could inspire you and others to help care for them. Here are Skerry's ideas to help you get started.

Photograph the animals you love. If you have pets, they make great animals to photograph. They're always around, so you can capture them at different times of the day. You may also want to try to photograph them doing something fun, such as playing with a toy or running in the yard.

Experiment with photo composition. Photo composition is when you decide how to arrange the objects in your camera's frame. To start, try to have the animal in the middle of the photo. Once you've mastered that, Skerry suggested getting creative and placing your animal on one side of the frame and including other items, such as objects from around your house, on the other side.

Use the camera to tell stories. Skerry, who produced the documentary *Secrets of the Whales*, once took a photo of an orca offering him a stingray to share as a meal. He said the photo captured how whales have a culture like humans do. Have your camera ready—a single picture can tell a great story!



CARE ABOUT HOW LIVESTOCK IS RAISED



By Zinn, 10, Georgia
As an animal rights activist, I worry that many people don't know where our meat comes from. There are about 9 billion animals

being raised for food in the US each year, and many of them may not have good lives on factory farms. To reduce animal cruelty, I am a vegetarian, which means I eat only plant-based foods and dairy products. Even if you aren't ready to stop eating meat, here are some other important steps you can take to protect animals.



Read food labels carefully. Food packaging can be tricky to understand. For example, the word "natural" doesn't tell consumers how animals were raised to create the product. Instead, look for "certified humane" and "animal welfare approved" on food packaging. These terms guarantee that farms have complied with animal welfare regulations. Eggs with these labels mean that the chickens had access to pastures and weren't confined to cages.

Eat less meat. Farms that raise animals for food are a major source of air and water pollution and can produce about 15% of greenhouse gas emissions, which contributes to climate change. By practicing "Meatless Mondays," you can reduce the demand for food products that harm the environment.

Learn about sustainable farming. Wyatt Williams, a food journalist and author of *Springer Mountain*, encourages children to visit local farmers markets. Talking to farmers there, kids may learn how the farms conserve resources and allow animals to roam and graze freely.



How to...



Make a difference

Junior Council members report on how kids can help animals and the environment.

When the 12 members of *The Week Junior's* Junior Council began meeting for the Spring 2023 session, they decided they wanted to use their voices to raise awareness about the importance of protecting animals and the environment. The children came up with specific ideas, conducted research on the topic, interviewed experts, and wrote their stories. We hope their work inspires you to take action! If you do, write to us about it at hello@theweekjunior.com.

SUPPORT PET FOSTERING AND ADOPTION



By Saranya, 13, Virginia

There are many animals in shelters waiting to be placed in loving homes. Here are three ways you can help.

Consider fostering.

Fostering is when an animal, such as a dog or cat, lives temporarily in a home while it waits to be adopted. Animals that are fostered can get more attention than they would in a shelter. Fostering can also help people figure out whether they are able to permanently take care of a pet, said Rena Lafaille, director of administration at the ASPCA Adoption Center in New York City. "Helping an animal learn to love and be loved gives you the chance to change its life for the better," she said.



Adopt a pet. If your family is ready to care for a pet permanently, adopting from a shelter has many benefits. For example, you can ask workers questions about the animal's behavior to make sure it's a match for your family. Lafaille said shelter workers can share an animal's medical needs, energy levels, and how it might get along with other animals.

Educate friends. Create flyers or give presentations to other kids in your area to help spread the word about the benefits of fostering and adopting pets. Your efforts can make a difference to animals in need!

USE YOUR VOICE TO SPEAK UP FOR WILDLIFE



By Viviana, 11, New Mexico

At the state capitol in Santa Fe, New Mexico, students recently spoke in support of Senate Bill 9, which would

fund programs to protect New Mexico's wildlife. It's amazing when students ask questions and come to legislative hearings, said Sarah Cottrell Propst, the state's cabinet secretary for energy, minerals, and natural resources department. Kids' voices do make a difference in the eyes of lawmakers, she said. When I spoke to students at the capitol, they shared their advice on using your voice.

Rally support. Check a local government's website to see when a public hearing for a law that affects animals will take place. Ask an adult if you can attend. Or ask your school if it could

plan a field trip to a local government office so more kids can attend. "It's helpful to have school support behind you," said Lemuel, one of the students who spoke.

Prepare a speech. Gather facts about the law that will be discussed, using trusted websites, like those that end in .edu, .org, or .gov. Decide which points you want to make and write your speech. Several students said memorizing and practicing their remarks made them feel less nervous about speaking.

Speak up. When you speak up, lawmakers will realize you want to be part of the solution. James, another student, said it's important not to sit back: "You have to be the one speaking because that's how you solve problems."



UNDERSTAND HOW THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST WORKS



By Sam, 10, New Hampshire

When an animal species is classified as endangered, it means it's in danger of going extinct (no longer existing). Under the United States' Endangered Species Act (ESA), endangered species have special protections to help increase their populations. Thanks to the ESA, numbers of grizzly bears have increased, and the bald eagle has been saved from disappearing. States also have their own endangered species lists.

As a wildlife biologist with the New Hampshire fish and game department, Heidi Holman monitors wildlife populations to determine if any species are at risk of extinction. "I do a species status assessment, which is a very formal scientific document that looks at all the information about a species," said Holman. She collects facts including what it eats and how its habitat is changing. "We're trying to protect species from extinction," she added.

If a species does get added to the list, its numbers usually begin to increase, which benefits the ecosystem as well. For example, the Karner blue butterfly is legally protected in New Hampshire. The butterfly is an umbrella species, meaning it supports other wildlife that lives in its unique pine barren habitat. One way it does this is by pollinating a variety of wildflowers!



ILLUSTRATIONS BY LORENA RAYOVA

TUNE IN TO YOUR PET'S FEELINGS



By Kyle, 10, California

You may not realize it, but animals have emotions like we do. They just have different ways of expressing them. "The question isn't whether they're feeling them but what they're feeling," said Marc Bekoff, a biologist at the University of Colorado Boulder. Here is his advice.

Look for signs. When dogs wag their tail, this could indicate that they are happy, excited, or anxious. When cats' hair stands on end, it may mean they are feeling scared or stressed. When threatened or angry, dogs might bark and cats may hiss. But it may be harder for humans to understand how other pets, such as lizards and snakes, are feeling. You might notice, though, that a lizard that feels afraid retreats to a corner to hide. Bekoff suggests video-recording your pet, whether it's a reptile or mammal, to observe and better understand it.

Keep notes. Try writing down what you notice about your pet's reactions in a journal so you can identify patterns in their behavior. Later, you can look back on your notes and learn to recognize your pet's responses when, for example, they're feeling tired or happy.

Enjoy the benefits of tuning in.

Understanding your pet's emotions can help you feel empathy for all animals, said Bekoff. This could lead to advocating for animals, such as by protecting wildlife or eating less meat. Being tuned in to our pets' feelings can have mental health benefits as well. By strengthening our connection to pets, both humans and animals are happier.



REMEMBER THAT SCARY ANIMALS NEED PROTECTING



By Jai, 8, Connecticut

You might think animals like snakes and sharks are scary, but they are important to our world. For instance, snakes eat rats, which can spread disease. These creatures play an important role in our ecosystem, said Charlotte Reemts, a scientist at the Nature Conservancy. Here are some surprising facts about how animals that seem frightening actually help the world.

They control populations. Wolves are apex (top) predators that eat large herbivores like deer and elk. If herbivores became overpopulated, they would eat so many plants and trees that less oxygen would be available, which isn't good for the environment. Wolves, which prey on these animals, help maintain a healthy balance of herbivores by lowering their numbers.

They maintain ecosystems. Without sharks, the ocean's ecosystem would fall out of balance. By preying on fish, sharks help coral reefs and seagrass thrive. That's because the fish would overfeed on the coral reefs and seagrass. The loss of sharks could lead to an increase in carbon dioxide levels in the ocean. Sharks play a role in reducing carbon dioxide because they eat dead animals in the ocean that are releasing the toxic gas. Without sharks, the carbon dioxide would rise into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change.

They lead to human discovery. Some snakes have the ability to see heat. This skill has helped scientists learn how to create cameras that can detect the heat of other living things. Likewise, bats' use of echolocation (locating objects using sound) has inspired inventions like sonar and radar, which are used in submarines to navigate deep, dark ocean water.

Humans have also developed navigational aids based on echolocation, similar to what bats use. We can all help protect these important animals by spreading awareness of their place in the world and advocating for their habitats to be preserved.



CHANGE EVERYDAY HABITS TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT



By Ryan, 10, New York

Making smart changes at home can decrease the amount of trash we produce and help animals. A lot of human-made trash ends up in the environment, which can destroy the habitats of animals and harm them, said Lauren Boccardi of the Nature Conservancy. In the ocean, turtles, fish, and porpoises can get stuck in various plastics, and birds may end up unintentionally eating plastic. Here are three ways you and your family can take action to make a difference.

Think before you buy. When shopping for clothes, try to buy only what you need—for example, to replace clothes you have outgrown. Before you buy anything, always ask yourself, "Do I need this? Could I borrow it or buy it used?" One idea is to go thrifting at secondhand stores, where you may find fun clothes at great deals.

Decrease food waste. The food you throw away can end up in landfills, which take up a huge amount of space and reduce the natural resources available to animals. One way to waste less food is to "shop the pantry," said Nena Shaw of the Environmental Protection Agency. While making a grocery list, check your cabinets. Use what you own first, before it goes bad or ends up in the trash. You could also plan a "leftovers night."

Do a trash safety check. Cut up plastic rings from beverage six-packs, remove ear loops from face masks, and secure plastic caps on bottles. This way, if these items mistakenly end up in the environment, they won't harm animals.





How to...

ALL ABOARD!

The largest model train set in the world is in Hamburg, Germany, and features more than six miles of tracks.



Try out model building

Make impressive and realistic creations with this fun hobby.

In model building, people build small, accurate versions of buildings, cars, ships, trains, and more. This is typically done by using a model kit that includes small wooden or plastic pieces, paint, and stickers. It's a hobby that has been around for decades, and there are new models to choose from every year. Here's how to get started.

Choose a kit

The first step to building a model is picking a kit. Consider selecting a model of something you like. Visit a hobby shop or look at specialty model building sites like modelerscentral.com. Some kits are very complicated, so look for one that's made for beginners or for kids. (Save the harder sets for after you have more experience.) The models will represent actual objects "to scale." For example, a car kit that's marked as a "1/24 model car" will be 1/24 the size of the real version of that car.

Set up your workstation

Depending on the type of kit, it may include everything you need or you may have to round up some additional items. Before you start, read the instructions to find out whether you need any extra materials you might not have. The kit may call for paint, paintbrushes, and glue, for example. Next, find a good spot to build your model, such as on a table or desk where you can leave pieces out for a while in case you spend several days

working on it. Lay down a crafting tablecloth or newspaper to protect the furniture.

Sort your parts

Model pieces are tiny and can be easy to lose. You may want to begin by opening up the pieces and sorting them into groups according to the steps in the instructions. You can keep them organized in a plastic fishing tackle box with divided compartments or in plastic bins with lids.

Get ready to start building

Building a model requires attention to detail, so you will need to carefully follow the directions. Reading through them before you begin can help you understand how the model will come together and help you avoid mistakes. Next, start assembling. If you run into obstacles, ask an adult for help.

Add finishing touches

Once you have completed building your model and letting any glue dry, it's time to add the finishing touches. Your kit may include instructions for how to paint it or add stickers, or it may leave that up to your own creativity. Once these details are finished, you can continue the project by creating a backdrop (like a picture of a sky or road) for your model. You can also choose a special shelf in your room where you can display it.



Start with a beginner kit.

4 more building hobbies to explore

If you enjoy model building, you might also like one of these related hobbies.

Woodworking

In woodworking, as with model building, you can use a kit to make objects, like a shelf or birdhouse. Ask an adult for help if you're using any tools.



Robotics



This area of science and engineering involves building machines, such as robots. Many schools and communities offer robotics clubs.

Sculpture

One way to create a sculpture is to use your hands to shape items out of clay. Or challenge yourself to build a piece with items in your family's recycling bin or natural items found outside.



Brick building



If you already like building with Lego bricks, take your skills to the next level by sketching a design of something to build and following it. You can make adjustments to your creation as you go. Or try a set from the Lego Architecture series, which includes detailed versions of famous buildings around the world.



How to...

TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR SKIN

With the weather getting warmer, you're more likely to be exposed to the sun and to sweat. Both can cause issues for your skin. Here's what to do.

- 1. Wash daily.** Cleanse your face each morning and evening, which can help prevent breakouts. To wash, wet your face with lukewarm water and use your fingertips to lightly rub a gentle cleanser onto your skin. Rinse, then pat skin dry with a towel.
- 2. Wear sunscreen.** In the morning, before you leave the house, it's a good idea to apply sunscreen. This will protect your skin from a surprise sunburn. Use a sunscreen with a label that says it offers broad-spectrum protection. Remember to reapply throughout the day as directed.
- 3. Cover up.** Don't forget the sensitive skin on your scalp. Whether it's sunny or overcast, it's smart to wear a hat, ideally with a brim. If you're wearing a baseball cap, be sure to apply sunscreen on your ears and the back of your neck.



FUN FACT

"Butter beans" are the same as lima beans, which got their nickname for their buttery taste.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the stove.

Cook Greek-style tomato-braised beans

Ingredients

- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- One 14.5-ounce can fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 1 cup water
- One 29-ounce can butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus more for topping
- Pita bread, for serving

Instructions

1. Chop the onion into small pieces and grate the two garlic cloves.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until just starting to soften, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in the grated garlic, tomato paste, diced tomatoes, and water. Bring mixture to a simmer, then stir in the beans, oregano, and thyme.
4. Cover the pan and simmer for 10 minutes, then remove cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until much of the liquid cooks off, about 10 minutes more. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Stir in the fresh dill and serve with pita bread. Makes 6 to 8 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

MAKE YOUR YARD BEE-FRIENDLY

Bees are an important part of our ecosystem because they act as pollinators, spreading pollen from plant to plant, which allows food crops to grow. However, bees are under threat as their natural habitats get taken over for other uses, like building developments. One way you and your family can help the bees is by participating in "No Mow May," where you skip mowing the lawn for the month of May. This will let your grass grow longer and sprout weed flowers (like yellow dandelions), which bees can use as food. Talk to your family about participating in No Mow May, and consider spreading the word to friends, too.

Let your grass grow.





How to...



WOW!

About 82% of Americans have bought or sold pre-owned items, such as clothing and electronics.

Host a clothing swap

Trading clothes and accessories with friends is fun—and good for the planet.

You might have clothes you no longer wear, and your friends probably do too. One way to clear out your closets: Trade clothes at a clothing swap party, where friends or family meet up to exchange clothes and accessories (like necklaces and shoes) they no longer wear. Everyone gets to update their wardrobe for free, and the environment wins, too, because clothes are kept out of landfills. Here's how to plan a swap.

Save the date

Talk to a family member about hosting a clothing swap party, and pick the date and number of people you want to invite. You could plan to host the event outside on a nice day or have it in your home, or look into reserving a room at your local library or recreation center. Reach out to the friends or family members you want to invite at least two weeks before the swap so they have time to gather items to bring.

Give guests guidelines

In order for the swap to be a success, everyone should bring a similar number of items. For example, you could ask every guest to bring at least five items but no more than 10. This will ensure there's enough stuff to choose from but not so much that you end up with a lot of extras. In general, guests should be able to take home as many items as they bring to the swap. Encourage

guests to bring items that are in good shape and clean, and remind them to bring their own tote bag to take home the items they want. Make a poster to hang at the event reminding everyone of the guidelines.

Go through your own closet

Take some time to gather your own items to bring to the swap. Grab a large bag or box, go through your clothes and accessories, and pick out what you'd like to give away. You could also make a pile of "maybe"

items and go through them a day or two before the clothing swap to decide if you're really ready to part with them.

Once you've settled on your final pieces to swap, fold or hang them nicely.

Set up shop

On the day of the swap, ask a friend to help you get ready. Designate tables where people can lay out their items when they arrive. If you have a portable hanging rack,

you could also set that up with some hangers. Another option, especially if you're doing the swap party outside, is to lay down picnic blankets where guests can display items. If you have a full-length mirror, set it up for the day, and establish a spot for people to try on items, like a nearby bathroom. If you'd like, you could provide snacks and drinks, or ask everyone to bring something to share. Once all your guests have arrived, let the swapping begin!



Put swap guidelines on a poster.

4 creative ways to upcycle clothing

Give new life to your old clothes with these ideas.

Make rags

If you have stained or torn clothes, cut them into squares. Use them as rags for dusting surfaces, to dry dishes, or as a substitute for paper towels.



Add some fun flair

If you have an item of clothing that fits well but you're tired



of it, add your own style to it. You can use patches or craft supplies, such as glue-on jewels, to give it a fresh look.

Wrap a gift

Use fabric instead of wrapping paper to wrap a gift. For example, take an old scarf, wrap the gift in it, and knot it in the center.



Create a quilt

Do you have T-shirts from trips or events that you've outgrown? You



can hang on to those memories by making a T-shirt quilt. Using fabric scissors, cut the shirts into large squares of equal size, then ask an adult to help you sew the squares together.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Ancient Greek and Roman soldiers used catapults to launch weapons during battles.



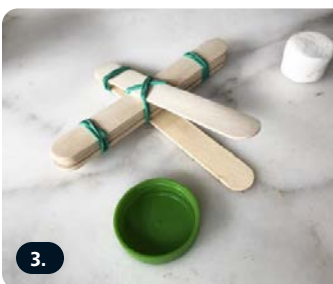
Craft a working catapult

What you need

- 10 wide craft sticks (also called tongue depressors)
- 5 rubber bands
- Recycled plastic bottle cap
- Hot glue and gun
- Marshmallow or pom-pom

Instructions

1. Stack eight of the craft sticks on top of one another. Wrap a rubber band around the stack of sticks about 1/2 inch from one end to secure them together. Then repeat with another rubber band about 1/2 inch from the other end.
2. Take the two remaining craft sticks and place one underneath the stack and one on top to make a cross-like shape (see photo). Use two rubber bands, diagonally over the middle, to hold these two craft sticks in place.
3. Slide the top and bottom sticks so one end sticks out about 2 inches. Wrap a rubber band around these two shorter ends to hold them in place.
4. You should now have one end of the top craft stick raised diagonally and be able to push it down and then let go to release. With an adult's help, hot glue the cap on the end of this craft stick.
5. Place a marshmallow or a pom-pom on the cap, press it down, and let go to watch it soar!



ECO TIP
OF THE WEEK

GROW SOME NATIVE PLANTS

A great way to help your local environment is to grow plants that are found naturally in your area. Known as native plants, they have adapted to grow in the soil conditions, temperature, and amount of rainfall in your geographical region. This makes them easier for people to grow, whether in a garden or outdoor pots, and they're environmentally friendly because they will require less extra water and fertilizer to thrive. Native plants, which can include ferns, shrubs, and wildflowers, are also good for your area's ecosystem because local birds and pollinators rely on them to survive. If you'd like ideas of what to grow, check out [audubon.org/native-plants](https://www.audubon.org/native-plants).



Wildflowers are one type of native plant.



DID YOU KNOW?
More than a billion people in 192 countries around the world take part in Earth Day each year.

Protect the planet

Celebrate Earth Day by making a difference in your community.

Earth Day, on April 22, is a time to celebrate the natural world and raise awareness of the major challenges our planet faces. This year's Earth Day theme is "Invest in Our Planet," which asks people to spend their time and resources to help fight climate change. Here are some simple ways you can take action and encourage family and friends to do the same.

Attend an event

On Earth Day and in the days leading up to it, people across the world will gather at special events. Options include participating in a march or rally to raise awareness of climate change, attending an arts workshop where you might paint a flowerpot, or taking a nature walk. You can visit earthday.org/earth-day-2023 to view a map of events that may be taking place near you.

Do a cleanup

Check local news sites for an Earth Day cleanup near your home. A cleanup is when people meet to help pick up trash and debris from a specific area, such as a park, beach, or river. Clearing away litter is important because it can pollute rivers and oceans, harm animals that eat it or get caught in it, and leak toxic chemicals into soil. Even if there isn't an official Earth Day cleanup happening nearby, you can still help. You

could head to a local area with your family or a small group of friends with gloves and trash bags and spend a couple of hours picking up litter.

Get planting

One way your family can invest in the planet is by planting a tree. Growing trees helps clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. You can check with your local public works department to find out if they already have a tree planting program (you may be able to get a tree for free). You can also plant flowers and vegetables in a garden. This is another way to reduce pollution because you can eat the food you grow and reduce your reliance on trucks to ship it to the store.

Advocate for change

Earth Day is a great time to remember to make your voice heard. Think about what you would like to see changed about the way people treat the planet. Then share those thoughts with others. You can write to a local government official and ask them to support rules that limit plastic use, for example. Or contact your parks department about making local cleanups a regular part of the community schedule. You can also talk to your family and friends about what you'll do to help the Earth—which might inspire them, too. Make your commitment with the form on the next page!



Plant a tree seedling.

Everyday eco tips to try at home

These simple habits can help you protect the Earth all year long.

Turn off lights

When you leave a room, shut off the lights. In the evening, try to wait as long as you can to turn them on.



Conserve water

Taking short showers and turning the faucet off while you're brushing your teeth can save gallons of water a day.

Avoid plastics

Disposable plastic items, like bags, water bottles, and straws, end up in landfills after one use and take years to break down. Instead, carry reusable versions with you.



Save paper

Instead of drawing or writing on a new pad of paper, use the back of something you've already written on or an envelope or flyer that came in the mail.

Skip the car

To reduce air pollution, walk or bike when you can instead of getting a ride.



GETTY IMAGES



How I'll help the Earth

While you're participating in Earth Day, you may feel inspired about ways you and others can help protect the planet. Use this form to help you organize your thoughts and express how you will be more eco-friendly. You can fill it out for yourself or share your ideas with family and friends. To share your thoughts and drawings with us at *The Week Junior*, ask an adult to email your form to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities. We may publish some submissions in future issues.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Earth Day, how will you pledge to help the planet?

What is your hope for the Earth five years from now?

Draw a picture of what taking care of the Earth looks like to you.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.



How to...

BUGGY CHOCOLATE BARK

Ingredients

- 10 ounces bittersweet chocolate chips
- Red and light green chocolate gem candies
- Green oblong fruit jelly candies
- Mini pretzels
- Black food marker
- Black pearl sprinkles
- Yellow candy-coated peanuts
- Sliced almonds
- Gummy worms
- Jumbo flower sprinkles
- Mini nonpareils



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender, knife, oven, or stovetop for any of these recipes.

Instructions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the chocolate chips in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave at 50% power for 1 minute. With an adult's help, take the bowl out and stir to melt chocolate. Continue to heat in 10-second bursts, stirring between each, until fully melted. Pour the chocolate onto the parchment-lined baking sheet and spread into a rectangle that is ¼ inch thick.
2. Make candy bugs and add them to the melted chocolate. For a ladybug, use the food marker to make spots on one side of a red chocolate gem.

Arrange it in the melted chocolate, then add a black pearl sprinkle head. For a bee, use the food marker to make stripes on a candy-coated peanut. Add it to the melted chocolate, and place sliced almonds for the wings. To make a dragonfly, place a row of 3 chocolate gems in the chocolate, then add a green fruit jelly candy for the tail and mini pretzels for wings.

3. Finally, add gummy worms, flower sprinkles, and nonpareils to the melted chocolate wherever you wish. Let the candy set before breaking it into pieces. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

RAINBOW RICOTTA TOAST

Ingredients

- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon dried parsley
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 2 slices thick-cut whole grain bread, toasted
- 5 cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1 small carrot, peeled and grated
- ½ medium yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 small cucumber, chopped

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, stir together the ricotta, olive oil, 1 or 2 generous pinches of garlic powder, and the parsley. Season with salt and pepper and stir once more.
2. Evenly divide the ricotta mixture between the two slices of toast. Top each slice with half of each of the tomatoes, carrots, bell pepper, and cucumber, arranging the vegetables in rainbow order as shown. Eat immediately. Makes 2 servings.

VERY VEGGIE
Doctors recommend that kids eat about three cups of vegetables per day.



RECIPES BY JOY HOWARD; PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINDA CAMPOS



How to...

CREAMY CARROT DIP

Ingredients

- 1 pound (about 3 to 4 large) carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 (15-ounce) can Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 3 tablespoons tahini
- ¼ cup lemon juice (from about 2 lemons)
- Big pinch smoked paprika
- Crackers or cut vegetables, for serving

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 425° F. Spread the carrots on a baking sheet and toss with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Roast the carrots until they are tender and brown in spots, about 20 to 25 minutes.
2. Place the roasted carrots, beans, garlic, tahini, lemon juice, and remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a food processor. Add ½ cup water and blend until smooth. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, and smoked paprika and blend once more. If the dip seems too thick, add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time, up to 2 tablespoons.
3. Transfer to a bowl and serve with crackers and your favorite cut vegetables, or store in an airtight container and refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes about 3 cups.



FUN FACT
It takes at least 540 peanuts to make one 12-ounce jar of peanut butter.

PEANUT BUTTER AND BERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- ½ banana
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup milk of choice (we used oat)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- Fresh blueberries (optional)

Instructions

1. Place all the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Divide evenly between two glasses. Garnish with fresh blueberries. Drink immediately. Makes about 2 cups.





**BONUS
ACTIVITY
SECTION**

How to...

Make tasty spring recipes

From breakfast to lunch, plus smoothies and treats, these delicious dishes are fun to whip up in the kitchen.

LEMON BERRY MUFFIN BITES

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest
- 6 tablespoons milk of your choice
- 1 egg, at room temperature
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 1¼ cups fresh blueberries

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender, knife, oven, or stovetop for any of these recipes.



DID YOU KNOW?

The word "muffin" comes from the German word *muffe*, which means soft bread.

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 350° F and coat a mini muffin pan with cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, brown sugar, granulated sugar, salt, poppy seeds, and lemon zest. Make sure to get rid of any lumps.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the milk, egg, vanilla, and melted butter.
4. Pour the wet ingredient mixture into the dry mixture and stir to combine. Do not overmix. Fold in the blueberries.
5. Fill each mini muffin well with batter.
6. Bake until golden around the edges, about 15 minutes. A toothpick poked into the center of a muffin should come out clean.
7. Let cool for 5 minutes in the pan, then remove muffins from pan and place on a cooling rack to cool completely. Makes 2 dozen muffins.

FRESH HERB OMELET IN A MUG

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 2 eggs
- 3 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon crumbled feta cheese, plus more for garnish
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper

Instructions

1. Coat a 12- to 16-ounce microwave-safe mug with cooking spray. Add the eggs, herbs, and cheese, then season with salt and pepper. Whisk with a fork until well blended.
2. Microwave on high power for 1 minute. With an adult's help, remove the mug from the microwave and stir. Continue to cook in 15-second increments, stirring between each, until the egg is set. If you like, garnish with more feta. Eat immediately. Makes 1 omelet.



RECIPES BY JOY HOWARD; PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINDA CAMPOS



How to...

FLOWER POWER CUPCAKES

Ingredients

- 2 or 3 pieces green sour tape candy
- 12 unfrosted mini cupcakes, made from your favorite recipe or mix
- 6 tablespoons white frosting
- Round chewy tart candies
- Chocolate gem candies
- Oblong fruit jelly candies

Instructions

1. Trim the green sour tape into several leaves that are ½ inch to ¾ inch long.
2. Working with one cupcake at a time, cover it with 1½ teaspoons white frosting.
3. Create a flower shape using the chewy tart, gem, and oblong fruit jelly candies in whatever way you wish.
4. Add sour tape pieces to create leaves, as shown.
5. Continue decorating with the remaining cupcakes, frosting, and candies. Makes 1 dozen cupcakes.



FRUIT BLAST SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen strawberries
- ½ cup frozen mango
- ¾ cup coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon agave
- Splash of vanilla

Instructions

1. Place all the ingredients in a blender and add ¼ cup water. Blend until smooth.
2. Divide evenly between two small glasses. Drink immediately. Makes about 2 cups.

TASTES GREAT

In the US, the most popular flavor for a smoothie is banana.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
The Mexican artist Frida Kahlo kept a visual diary from 1944 to 1954 and chronicled her thoughts in words and paintings.

Keep an art journal

Explore your thoughts and ideas visually with this activity.

An art journal is like a written journal, except it's more than words alone. It's a visual diary where you can express yourself through sketching, painting, or any art form you enjoy. This could mean creating a drawing of a picture that reflects your feelings, painting a special memory, or pasting together a collage of images and words that represents a goal you have. Research suggests that keeping an art journal helps reduce stress, solve problems, and connect with your creative side. Here's some advice for getting started.

Choose a journal

A sketchpad is a good option for your art journal. These pads typically feature thicker paper than traditional notebooks, so you can use markers and paints without worrying about them bleeding through the paper. It's helpful if the pad you use has a spiral binding, since sometimes you might need to leave your journal open to let artwork dry. If you already have a sketchbook, consider ripping out any used pages so you can start fresh with your art journal.

Gather art supplies

Round up supplies you already own. A small watercolor paint set, colored pencils, markers, and crayons can give you many creative options. You can add more to your stash over time. Next, gather catalogs, newspapers, or

other printed material to cut words from. Keep sponges and paintbrushes, glue sticks, and a small pencil sharpener handy. Since art journals can feature many types of art, you can mix up the tools you use.

Create an entry

The only rule of keeping an art journal is there are no rules. If you have an idea of what you want to do for an entry, get started. If you're not sure where to begin, one easy place to start is with a background. Use brushes or sponges to paint colors all over a page, or create a frame with markers or by gluing a collage of colored paper to your page. Once your background is done and dry, you can add layers with drawings, shapes, patterns, or words. If you're not sure what to depict, think about something that happened during your day and try to represent that. You can also take your journal outside and make art that is inspired by something you see, such as a pretty view.

Make it a habit

Many of the benefits of keeping an art journal are gained by doing it regularly. You can make it a part of your daily routine by doing it before bed or right after school. You could also choose to carry a second, smaller journal to school and fit in your creativity when you have a break in your day—or anytime you feel inspired.



You can update a journal anywhere.

4 other types of creative journals

If you enjoy keeping an art journal, you might also like to try one of these other types of journals.

Dream journal

Place a journal and pen by your bed to jot down your dreams after you wake up. They can be fun to reread or provide inspiration for a short story or art project.



Reading journal



Each time you start a new book, write the title in your

journal, then add your thoughts about the book as you read. You can also rate it after you finish it so you can remember authors and genres you liked.

Travel journal

Bring a journal with you when you go on a trip, and fill it with notes about what you saw, where you went, and what you did. You can even tape or glue in mementos, like tickets, photos, or postcards.



Nature journal



The next time you spend time outdoors, write down what you saw.

What plants were blooming?
What animals did you spot?
Notice how your entries change with the seasons.



How to...

ORGANIZE YOUR CLOTHES BETTER

Keeping your drawers tidy will make it faster and easier to find the clothes you're looking for when getting dressed. Here's what to do.

- 1. Start with a purge.** If your drawers are stuffed with clothes, it can be difficult to keep them organized. Go through your items and donate anything that no longer fits. Store clothes that are out of season in a container under your bed.
- 2. Group by categories.** Storing similar items with one another is an easy way to keep organized. To do this, split your clothes into the same number of categories as drawers you have. For example, if you have three, you could have socks and underwear in one drawer, shirts in another, and pants and shorts in the last.
- 3. Roll everything.** Instead of folding and stacking your clothes, consider rolling them. Once your clothes are folded, roll them into a cylinder shape. Place them in your drawer from the back to the front, instead of piling them. This lets you see all of them.



FUN FACT

There are about 350 different types of pasta in the world and about four times as many names for them.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a blender, knife, or stovetop.

Make a cheesy onion pasta

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter
- Olive oil
- 3 onions, sliced
- 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups beef broth
- 1 pound small pasta
- ½ cup shredded Gruyère cheese
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 4 baguette slices
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Melt butter and warm 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until golden brown.
2. Add the mushrooms and thyme to the pot, stirring about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic. Add the broth and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Increase the heat to bring liquid to a boil.
3. Stir in the pasta, then cover and cook. Stir frequently until pasta is al dente (firm). Most of the liquid will be absorbed into the pasta.
4. Stir in the shredded Gruyère cheese and the sherry vinegar and remove from heat. Cover and let sit.
5. Use a blender to make bread crumbs. Put in baguette slices, cover, and use "pulse" setting until crumbled. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a skillet over medium-high and add crumbs. Cook, stirring often, until crumbs are golden and crisp. Remove from heat. Stir in Parmesan cheese and season with salt and pepper.
6. Give the pasta a good stir, then divide among bowls. Top each serving with bread crumbs. Makes 4 servings.

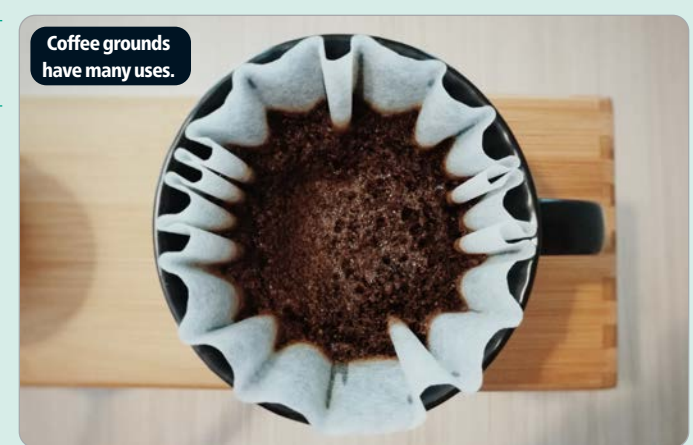


ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

REUSE COFFEE GROUNDS

If any of the adults in your home make coffee, you may have noticed that after brewing a pot there are leftover coffee grounds in the filter. Many people throw them away, but it's better for the environment to reuse coffee grounds instead of sending them to a landfill. One excellent option is to help fertilize your potted plants or garden with them. Coffee grounds are high in nutrients like nitrogen, potassium, and magnesium, which help plants thrive. To use as a fertilizer, mix about one part grounds with six parts soil, then add the mixture to your potted plants or use it to top off the soil around plants in your garden.

Coffee grounds have many uses.





How to...

DID YOU KNOW?
The first Sunday newspaper comics to appear in color were published in 1894 in the New York World.



Create your own comics

This art form is a fun way to bring out your sense of humor.

If you like to draw—and make people laugh—creating comics can be a fun activity to try. A comic tells a story with illustration and words. You can make a single comic or draw a comic strip in several panels (boxes). *The Week Junior* spoke with comic book author Jarrett Lerner, who said, “Comics combine two languages: the visual and the verbal.” Here, he shares how you can get started.

Get inspired

The first step to coming up with a comic is to read other comics, whether in comic books, funny graphic novels, or the comics section of a newspaper. “Seeing how other people create comics is a great way to get a feel for the language of comics and the possibilities for them,” says Lerner. As you read the comics, consider how the artist made the pictures and words work together. What do you notice about the illustrations? What words were used to tell a joke or story?

Sketch some ideas

Think about what you want to draw. Use a sketchpad to doodle your character or characters first. Will they be animals, people, or maybe both? Consider what you want your comic to convey. “It might take some time, but gradually, you’ll get a sense of what you need to show and say,” says Lerner. Sketch and scribble some of those thoughts down into a sketchbook.

Develop your main character

Once you have an idea of what you want to draw, focus on your main character. Who is it, and what are they like? Main characters often have something they really want, whether it’s a boy who wants to finally kick the football or a spoiled pet that craves delicious food. Think about what your character wants—and what might be in their way. “For me, that is the ultimate driver of story: a character who wants something and faces obstacles getting it,” says Lerner.

Balance words and text

Your comic may better reveal what your character is thinking or what is happening if you add words. You could add a text bubble above a character to show a funny thought or write dialogue (when characters talk to each other). Try a few options to see what you like, and don’t worry if you get stuck. Says Lerner: “By pushing through challenges, you’ll become a stronger creator.”

Put it all together

Once you’ve decided on your characters, practiced your drawings, and written some sample text, you’re ready to make your comic. Use a pencil to draw and write it. Then you can “ink” it: Trace over your work with markers or colored pencils to create the finished piece. The most important thing about creating? “Have fun!” says Lerner.



Start in pencil and color in later.

Ask a comic book author

Jarrett Lerner—who is the award-winning creator of the *EngiNerds* and *Geeger the Robot* series and other best-selling books—shares what it’s like to create comics for a living.



How did you get such a cool job?

I worked hard, but I also had a lot of fun. If kids think they want to have a job like mine someday, the best thing they can do is read, write, and draw. And share your work! Ask for feedback from your friends and family, and use it to make your work even better.



If you could be any comic book character, who would it be?

I’d like to be myself but able to spend time in some of my favorite comic worlds. Like the one in Jarod Roselló’s two *Red Panda and Moon Bear* graphic novels or the one in Aron Nels Steinke’s *Mr. Wolf’s Class* series.



Where do you get inspiration for your ideas?

Reading is a big one for me. So I’m always reaching for books to get inspired and excited about creating myself. I also always try to make plenty of time to play with my kids. They are the most creative people I know. Playing with them always leaves me inspired and fired up to create.



GETTY IMAGES (2), COURTESY JARRETT LERNER, BOOKS: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS



How to...



Share your comic with us!

Use the space below to create your own comic to send to us at *The Week Junior* (see instructions at bottom of form). If you use pencil, be sure to go over your finished work with ink or marker. Your comic may be published in an upcoming issue!

First name: _____

Age: _____

State: _____

Large empty space for drawing a comic.

To share this form with us, ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities. We may publish some submissions in future issues. (By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian’s permission before sending anything to us.)



How to...

OUT OF THIS WORLD

During the Apollo 14 space mission in 1971, astronaut Alan Shepard hit two golf balls on the Moon.



Take a swing at golf

Spring is the perfect time to get outside and give this sport a try.

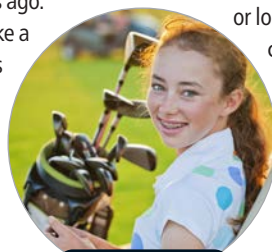
More than 66 million people around the world play golf. Many people say they enjoy the sport because there are endless possibilities—you can play a short game or a long one, and every golf course is different. People of all ages can take part, too, so you can play with anyone from your friends to your grandparents. Here's how to get started.

Know the basics

The basic premise of golf has remained the same since the game was invented hundreds of years ago. Using metal sticks called clubs, players take a stroke (swing) to hit a small ball into holes on a golf course. Courses typically have 9 or 18 holes and can have challenging obstacles like sand traps and ponds. The winner is the player who hits the ball into each hole with the fewest strokes.

Get set up with good gear

To play golf, you'll need clubs. Adult clubs may be too large, making it difficult for you to hit and control the ball. Try to use clubs specifically made for kids. You don't need a whole set—just a few to start out. Many golf courses have junior clubs that kids can borrow or rent. A parent can also check local social media groups for used equipment. Other things you'll need are golf balls, gloves (to prevent blisters), and shoes, which can be rented or purchased at a golf shop or sporting goods website.



Clubs in the right size can help.

Aim for proper form

The first step in playing golf is to learn the proper way to hold and swing your clubs. If you do this correctly from the start, you may save yourself from having to spend time correcting your technique later on. There may be an adult in your life who can show you the basics, or you could view online instructional videos, such as the ones at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-golf. If your town has a public golf course, it might offer clinics for kids or even camps this summer. Check with the course or local recreation department to find out. You can also check out uskidsgolf.com for junior golf programs in your area.

Practice and play

The best way to get better at golf is to practice. You can get extra golf time in at a driving range, which is a place where you can pay for a bucket of golf balls, then hit them onto a big field. A putting green is where you can work on closer shots. It will feature a small grassy area where you can putt (hit the ball into the hole with a short swing). When you feel like you're ready to play a full game on the course, book one with 9 holes. Ask for a time when your local course won't be too crowded (like a weekday afternoon). That way you'll be less likely to have other groups of golfers waiting behind you, so you can take your time and just enjoy playing.

4 sports that boost your golf game

These activities, which you may already enjoy doing, teach skills that transfer well to playing golf.

Baseball

Hand-eye coordination is important for being able to hit a baseball and send it flying. This same skill applies to hitting a golf ball off the tee.



Soccer

Running up and down a soccer field builds lower-body strength. This



can help you be stable and strong for swinging your golf clubs. Soccer can also help build the endurance to play a full 18-hole game of golf.

Tennis

When you swing a tennis racket, you're rotating your arms and shoulders. These are the same kinds of movements you need to comfortably handle a golf club.



Kayaking

Propelling a kayak through the water using a two-sided



paddle can bolster your upper-body strength, which can help you develop a more powerful golf swing.



How to...

WOW!

More than 50 million Americans put out a billion pounds of bird seed every year.



Recycle to make a bird feeder

What you need

- Recycled plastic tennis ball container or metal coffee can
- Permanent marker
- Chopstick or small twig
- Pushpin and nail
- Scissors
- String
- Can opener
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paintbrush
- Hot glue gun
- Bird seed

Instructions

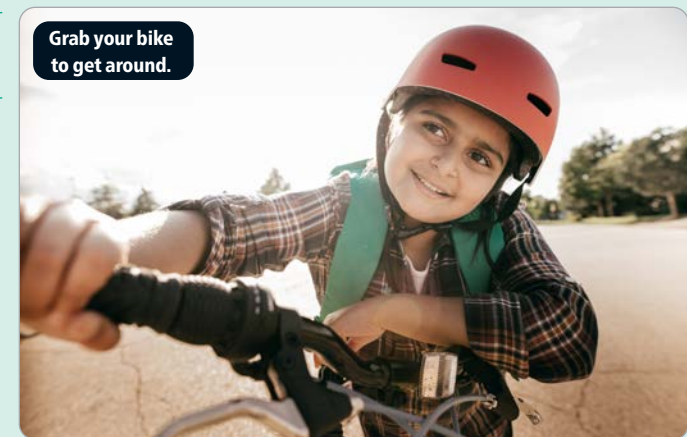
1. To make a bird feeder out of a tennis ball container, first make "perches" for the birds to stand on as they eat. With the marker, make two dots across from each other on the container. With adult supervision, use a pushpin to pierce each dot to make a hole, then carefully poke with the nail to enlarge.
2. Continuing with an adult's help, rotate the tip of a scissors' blade to enlarge holes just enough to stick a chopstick or twig in. Push chopstick or twig through the holes, so it extends a few inches from each side of container.
3. Use the same hole-punching technique to create a small feeding hole about 1¼ inch above each perch. The holes should be taller than they are wide, an upright oval about ¼-inch tall and ⅛-inch wide.
4. With adult supervision, punch two more holes across from each other at the very top of the container for the string. Thread string into each hole and knot each end.
5. To make a bird feeder from a coffee can, start by using the can opener to remove the can bottom. Cut the can's plastic lid in half.
6. Paint the outside of the coffee can any way you'd like. (Prime it first if you'd like, to cover any printing on the can.) Let dry.
7. Place the plastic lid halves on either side of the can, lining them up with each other. Use hot glue to secure them into place. Cut a piece of string to your desired length. Thread it through inside the can and knot it.
8. Pick a spot where birds will be safe from predators while they perch and eat. Fill your bird feeders with seeds, then hang them spaced well apart, at eye level or slightly above.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK BREAK OUT YOUR BIKE

As the weather warms up, consider riding your bike more often to get around your neighborhood instead of asking family members to drive you places. By hopping on a bike, you'll be getting fresh air and exercise and helping the environment too. Unlike motor vehicles, bicycles don't use up resources like gas and fuel or cause air or noise pollution. You could consider asking other kids in your neighborhood if they would like to bike to school, into town, or to weekend activities with you. Be sure to wear a helmet, obey traffic laws, bring a bottle of water, and lock up your bike safely at your destination.

Grab your bike to get around.





How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

On average, people in the US spend a total of 2.5 days per year looking for misplaced items.

Declutter your space

In a few simple steps, you can have your room organized.

Having a room with your belongings put away until you need them can make your space more enjoyable to be in. Spring is a time when people often deep-clean their homes, making now a good time to tidy up. If you share a bedroom with a sibling, perhaps you can sort through the clutter together. But just organizing your own area of the room can be rewarding. Here's how to get started.

Consider the benefits

Think of decluttering as treating your belongings with respect. You want to enjoy the items you love without tripping over them or being unable to find them. Consider what you'll gain by tidying up. For example, rediscovering an old treasure you'd forgotten about would be exciting. Assess the areas where you could better store items, such as desk drawers, a closet, or plastic containers on a shelf. The goal is to have a dedicated space for everything so it will be easier to find items when you need them.



Use boxes to store similar items.

Start small

You don't have to organize your room in one day. That could feel overwhelming. Instead, focus on one small area. This could be your nightstand where books have started to pile up. Or maybe it's a drawer that is stuffed with notebooks and photos. Once you've identified what to organize, start sorting what's there into three separate

piles: one for items you want to keep; another for items you want to donate; and one for things that need to be recycled or thrown away. You can return any "keep" items to the nightstand or shelf that belong there, or you may decide they belong somewhere else.

Identify new organizing areas

After you've cleared out several spaces in your room, look through the "keep" items that still need to be organized. Use baskets, boxes, jars, or other containers to store

similar items together. Aim to put the containers on shelves or in drawers near where you typically use them. For example, hair accessories could be in a basket by a mirror. A jar on your desk could store art supplies, pens, and pencils. If you'd like, you can decorate your containers to personalize them.

Sort through the rest

Ask an adult to help you go through your pile for donating and your pile for recycling and trash. They can help you decide how to

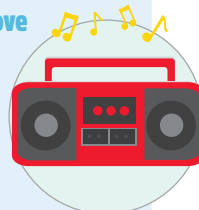
dispose of them. For example, you may have a neighbor or family friend with a child who is younger than you who might like to have the clothes, books, and toys you've outgrown. Or find out if there is a local house of worship or charity where you can drop off your donations. Many communities also have social media groups people use to give away items.

4 creative ways to clean up

Tidying up may be a chore, but you can make it more enjoyable with these ideas.

Play what you love

Listening to music (or a podcast or book) is a great way to keep yourself entertained while you get busy organizing. You can enjoy what's being played while completing your task.



Set a timer

How long do you think it will take to clean out that drawer?



How about the bookcase? Make a guess and set a timer to see if you can beat your prediction.

Make it a game

If you have siblings who are cleaning up with you, see who can complete certain fun tasks the fastest. For example, you can race to find out who can pick up all the blue toys in the room first.



Have fun afterward

Check with an adult to see if you can do a



favorite activity after you finish cleaning your space. You could go out for ice cream or have some of your friends over—and enjoy hanging out in your newly decluttered room.

KEEP A JOURNAL ABOUT GRATITUDE

A gratitude journal is a notebook for recording aspects of life that you're thankful for. Writing in one has been shown to help people feel happier and healthier. Here's how to begin.

- 1. Pick a journal.** You don't need a special journal to get started—any notebook will work. You can recycle one that's mostly unused by pulling out pages that have been written on. If you have a phone, you could use the Notes app.
- 2. Start writing.** Every day, write down one to three things you're grateful for. It could include people in your life, a fun activity you did that day, or even something you were excited to learn. Consider drawing pictures or adding photos to accompany your thoughts.
- 3. Reread often.** Every few weeks—or as often as you'd like—reread some of your previous entries. This can help spark fun and happy memories, which can boost your mood on days when you need it.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

START A FAMILY "GO GREEN" FUND

Your family can help the planet by cutting back on resources like water, gas, and electricity. To help motivate parents and siblings, start a "go green" fund. Get together and review bills to see how much your household is spending on water, gas, and electricity. Aim to spend less by challenging everyone to use less. Ideas include setting timers for shorter showers, using the cold setting on the washing machine, and turning off the lights when leaving a room. When you get next month's bills, compare them to those from the same month last year and calculate how much you saved. Discuss putting some of that money toward something fun, like a special family outing.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMAKET; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

How to...



FUN FACT
One in 10,000 clovers has four leaves rather than three.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Make shamrock lollipops

What you need

- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Lollipop sticks or wooden skewers
- Green apple Jolly Rancher hard candies
- Heavy-duty scissors or kitchen shears

Instructions

- 1.** Heat oven to 275° F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. If you're using wooden skewers instead of lollipop sticks, ask an adult to help you carefully use the scissors to snip off the pointy tips of the skewers and then cut each stick in half.
- 2.** Place three of the hard candies (unwrapped) in an upside-down T shape on the baking sheet, leaving enough room to add a stick later. Place in the oven and bake for 3½ minutes. Remove carefully.
- 3.** Allow the candy to cool for 30 seconds, or until it's cool enough to touch but not

harden. Add a stick under the center of the shamrock and carefully use your fingers to press the softened candy into a shamrock shape around and onto the stick. With scissors, make a small snip in the center of each of the shamrock's leaves to make it heart-shaped.

- 4.** Place the baking sheet back in the oven for 2 minutes to melt and smooth out the pop. Remove from the oven and allow pop to cool on the baking sheet.

Helpful hint: You can make more than one lollipop at once, but since the candies melt and harden quickly, it's best to make no more than three at the same time.



Little changes can add up.



How to...

GARDEN HELPERS

Earthworms are called "nature's plows." By breaking up soil, they help water reach plants.



Plan your spring garden

Get ready for the planting season with these easy tips.

Spring is nearly here, making now a good time to start planning a vegetable or flower garden. There is some fun and creative work to do before you'll be ready to put your first plants in the ground. Here's how to get started.

Sketch it out

Whether you and your family want to plant a new garden this spring or adjust one you already have, you can start by sketching out a plan for it. First, head outside with a tape measure and measure your existing garden or the area where you'd like to plant a new one. Use these measurements to draw an outline of the garden on graph paper. Add plants that are already there, such as shrubs, trees, and perennials (plants that bloom every year). Next, pencil in what you'd like to plant this year. Maybe you want to add flowers in colors you love or some of your favorite vegetables. You can also check your local library for books about plants that grow well in your area. Or bring your drawing to a garden center and ask for help.

Consider a theme

If you're feeling undecided about what you want in your garden, you can use a theme to guide you. For example, some people plant butterfly or pollinator bee gardens that include flowers that these insects like to

be around. If you want to plant vegetables, you could do a "pizza garden" that includes ingredients like tomatoes, basil, and oregano. You can use the theme for your whole garden or just a section.

Prep the space

It's important to wait to plant your garden until the last frost has occurred in your area. Depending on where you live, this can vary from now until late May. You can ask the staff at the garden center for advice or check the website almanac.com. Even if it's not time to plant, you can

start working on the soil as long as it isn't too wet from snow melt or winter rains. Begin by clearing out any debris, like sticks, leaves, dead plants, and weeds, that may have ended up in the garden since last year. You can also start raking the soil so it's nice and loose for your plants when you're ready to put them into the ground.

Start your plants

If you want to grow some of your plants from seeds, plant the seeds inside in small containers and place them on a sunny windowsill. Once they sprout and the ground is warm enough for you to plant outside, you can transplant them into your garden. Another option is to buy small plants at a garden center to plant directly into the ground. You'll soon be able to enjoy all the flowers or vegetables that you grew yourself!



Pick what you plant.

4 easy plants you can grow

These plants are perfect for beginners because they're simple to care for.

Cherry tomatoes

Since cherry tomatoes are small, they grow and ripen relatively fast. This plant also does just as well in a container on a stoop or deck as it does in a full garden.



Sunflowers

Options for these flowers range from small types that do well in



pots to giant varieties that grow 14 feet high. These large yellow flowers thrive in many different environments and tend to grow quickly.

Lamb's ear

This hardy, silvery-green plant gets its name from its soft fuzzy leaves, which resemble a lamb's ear. Lamb's ear works well as a border in a garden or in a pot with more colorful flowers.



Marigolds

These cheerful, fast-growing flowers thrive in sunny spots with almost any type of soil. They can withstand hot temperatures and will bloom for most of the summer.



How to...



FUN FACT

The longest strand of pasta, measuring more than 12,000 feet, was made in Japan in 2010.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

MAKE CANDLES IN GLASS JARS

Candles can help a space feel cozy, and they're fun to make with these instructions and an adult's help.

- 1. Gather supplies.** You'll need small, clean glass jars with the labels removed. You'll also need wicks (the string you light on the candle) as well as wax flakes, available at crafting stores or online.
- 2. Prep and pour.** Cut a piece of wick that is the same length as the height of the jar. Center one end of the wick inside, and thread the other end through a craft stick with a hole in the middle. Set the stick on top of the open jar. Have an adult help you melt the wax flakes according to package directions. Together, carefully pour the wax into the jars. Fill the jars to an inch below the top, and let harden before removing the craft stick.
- 3. Enjoy safely.** Keep the candles in a common area of your home, like the kitchen, but never in your bedroom. Enjoy lighting them with an adult's permission, but always blow them out before leaving the room.



Ingredients

- 1 pound cubed butternut squash (you can buy it precut)
- 3 shallots, trimmed and quartered
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 8 ounces feta cheese in a block shape
- 1 pound pasta (such as rigatoni or penne)
- 1 cup baby spinach

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400° F. Cut any large cubes of squash into bite-size pieces. In a large baking dish, combine the squash, shallots, and thyme. Drizzle with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Toss ingredients together to coat.
- Nestle the whole block of feta cheese into the center of the dish and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. With an adult's help, put the dish into the oven. Bake uncovered until the squash and shallots are tender and golden, 35 to 40 minutes.
- Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the package directions until it's al dente (firm). Drain pasta, reserving ½ cup of the pasta water.
- Add the cooked pasta into the squash mixture and toss together to combine, adding the reserved pasta water a little at a time to loosen the sauce, as necessary.
- Stir in baby spinach until just wilted.
- Season dish to taste with salt and freshly ground pepper, and serve hot. Makes 4–6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

REUSE OLD NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers and advertisements that get delivered or come in the mail can quickly stack up. To get more life out of them and cut down on the use of other types of paper, consider the many ways they can be used at home. They're great for cleaning windows, for example, and they don't leave smudges or streaks the way paper towels sometimes do. If you have wet boots or sneakers, ball up newspaper and stuff it inside. Leave the paper in overnight to soak up moisture, then discard it in the morning. Newspapers are also handy for crafts. You can use them for paper-mache projects or cut out photos or words for collages.

Save papers for art projects.





How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Sport climbing was made an official Olympic event at the 2020 Games in Tokyo.



Try indoor rock climbing

This exciting sport can help you build strength and balance.

Indoor rock climbing is a sport that's growing in popularity every year, with approximately 6 million people in the US now participating. This adventurous activity involves ascending an imitation rock wall while secured in a harness and attached to a rope. It's a great way to build strength, coordination, mental focus, and problem-solving skills. And because it's an indoor sport, you can do it any time of year. Here's how to get started.

Understand the basics

Indoor rock climbing is typically done at a special rock climbing gym, though some local recreation centers and schools also have climbing programs. You'll climb up and across an imitation rock wall. Climbing walls may be between 30 and 60 feet high, with hand grips and footholds all the way up. You climb while attached to a rope, to keep you safe from falling. Many indoor climbing gyms also feature bouldering walls, which are shorter and don't require a rope, making them a good option for beginners.

Get into gear

If you've seen an indoor climbing gym in your area or have friends who go to a specific one, check it out. Or visit indoordimbing.com, which offers a directory of climbing gyms in each state. Once you've found the gym you want to try, go to its website to find out how to sign up for an

initial orientation or class. This is when an instructor will teach you how to put on your harness, use the ropes, and most important, stay safe while you climb. The gym should offer you the helmet, harness, and climbing shoes, which have rubber soles that make them extra grippy. Wear comfortable athletic clothes.

Respect the rules

Some types of rock climbing, like free solo climbing where people scale real rocks with no ropes, can be dangerous. However, the indoor rock climbing that's good for kids is typically safe as long as you follow the rules. This is why it's important to start with an orientation, in which a trained instructor will teach you how to use the ropes and harness that protect you from falling, as well as climbing etiquette, like taking turns on the wall.



Choose your route.

Head on up

Get your equipment on and have the instructor check your harness and rope. When the instructor gives you the OK to start climbing, grab the colorful grips with your hands and push yourself further up with your feet. Many gyms offer routes up the wall that are coded by color, from easy to hard. Ask the instructor what colors to follow on your first few climbs. You can work up to more challenging climbs. If you like climbing, the best way to get better at it is to practice!

4 more adventure sports to check out

If you think indoor rock climbing sounds fun, you might also enjoy these exciting activities.

Surfing

This sport increases confidence and endurance as you stand on the board and ride ocean waves to shore. Many coastal vacation areas offer lessons for kids.



Mountain biking

Riding a mountain bike on dirt trails through the woods is an



exhilarating experience. See if there's a park in your area with easy dirt bike trails to try. If you like it, do another lap and work up to more technical trails.

Parkour

The goal of parkour is to get through an obstacle course as fast as you can. Expect to run, climb, and jump over obstacles to get to the finish.



Ninja obstacle courses

Similar to the TV show *American Ninja Warrior*, this athletic challenge can be found at gyms that offer obstacle courses. You might have a chance to climb nets, walk a balance beam, and swing over foam pits.



How to...



WOW!

A drawing on a cave wall in France is believed to be the oldest known portrait of a human face. It is 27,000 years old.



Make a silhouette portrait of yourself

What you need

- A camera (you can use a phone camera)
- Computer and printer
- Tape
- Two different colors of paper, such as scrapbooking or origami paper
- Scissors
- White glue
- Small paintbrush
- Frame

Instructions

1. Stand against a blank wall with one shoulder against it so you're facing toward the side and your profile is visible. (If you have long hair, you might want to wear it in a ponytail or bun so that it doesn't hide your neck.) Have a friend or family member shoot a photo of the side of your head, including your neck and shoulders.
2. Upload the photo to your computer and print it out in a size slightly

smaller than your frame. (Ask for help from an adult if you need to.)

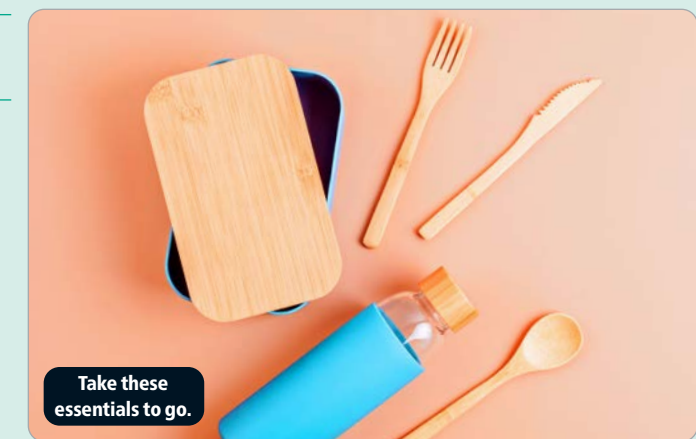
3. Tape your photo printout to a piece of paper in the color of your choosing. This color will be the color of your silhouette.
4. Using scissors, carefully cut around the head through the printout and colored paper at the same time, taking your time to carefully cut around details like eyelashes and hair. Include the neck and, if you'd

- like, a bit of the shoulders. You can round the bottom with your scissors to make your silhouette look a little more finished.
5. Dab a tiny bit of glue onto your paintbrush. Paint a very thin layer of glue on the back of your silhouette and adhere it to your remaining sheet of paper.
6. Place your finished silhouette in the frame, and hang or display according to the frame's directions.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK BUILD A ZERO WASTE KIT

Avoiding the use of single-use plastics like straws and takeout containers helps protect the environment and keep items out of landfills. This is easy to do at home, when you have access to all your kitchen items, but harder when you're out with your family or eating at a restaurant. One way to prepare for these situations is to keep a zero waste kit in your family's car. Grab a small box or tote bag and fill it with metal straws, cloth napkins, reusable flatware, and a food container with a lid. This way, if you get a to-go drink or take home leftovers from a restaurant, you have your own reusable straws and containers instead of the disposable plastic ones offered to you.



Take these essentials to go.



How to...



WOW!
The world's most famous portrait, the Mona Lisa, has its own mailbox in the Louvre Museum for the many letters it receives.

Appreciate fine art

Find out how to connect with paintings, sculptures, and more.

Going to an art museum or gallery can be a fun activity to do with family and friends. For many people, though, viewing art can feel intimidating. It may even seem boring if you're not sure what the art is about. Thankfully, there are many ways to appreciate different types of art and tap into what the work might mean to you. Here are some steps to get you started.

Choose a museum

You don't need to visit the most famous museum in your area. Instead, have an adult help you look at the websites of a few local museums to see what types of art or special exhibits are on display. Choose one to visit that has something you're interested in. For example, if you love fashion, you might head to a museum that is featuring sketches from famous designers. If you enjoy taking photos, you might want to view a photography exhibit.

Take your time

When you're at the museum and a piece of art catches your eye, pause and spend some time really taking it in. You can start by getting close to the artwork (without touching it) so you can see details you might miss if you were viewing it online. If you're looking at a painting, for example, consider the texture on the surface and whether any brushstrokes are visible. Then step back and look at

the way the brushstrokes work together to create the piece of art. Think about the story the artwork may be trying to tell. Try looking at it from a different angle, or bring a notebook and pencil with you so you can sketch it. You might see new aspects of it that you didn't notice before.

Consider the meaning

Once you've absorbed the physical aspects of the work, try to find out more about what it means. A volunteer at the museum (often called a docent) may be available to talk to you about the piece. Free brochures may also provide information. You can also ask yourself what the work means to you. For example, maybe the colors in the piece remind you of a place that's special to you or it taps into emotions you've been feeling.

Reflect on what you saw

Thinking about the meaning, subject, colors, and setting of a piece of art can help you better understand and appreciate artists and their work. After you leave the museum, consider which pieces of art stay in your mind and why. Talk to a friend or adult who went with you, and ask them about their favorite pieces, too. Thinking about how artists—especially those who might be from a different background or lived thousands of years ago—can connect with others through their work is part of the magic of art.



Focus on all the details.

4 museums you can visit online

From famous paintings to ancient artifacts, these museums offer tours you can take from home.

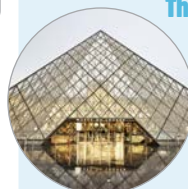
The British Museum

This museum in London, in the UK, offers an online collection featuring art and artifacts from around the world that date back as far as 2 million years ago. tinyurl.com/TWJUS-TBM



The Louvre

You can virtually walk five galleries of this museum in Paris, France,



to spot everything from paintings by artists like Rembrandt to an exhibit on the importance of dance. tinyurl.com/TWJUS-LouvreTour

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The online time machine at this New York City museum features treasures such as an ancient bowl that sits on top of carved feet. tinyurl.com/TWJUS-MetTour



National Museum of Natural History

In the online tour of this museum in Washington, DC, you can go back in time and zoom in on a giant mastodon fossil. tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NaturalHistory

REDUCE YOUR SCREEN TIME

It's easy to end up spending a lot of time on a computer, tablet, or phone during the day, which can take away from other interesting things you could be doing. Here's how to be more mindful of your screen time.

- 1. Set a timer.** If you don't already have a certain amount of time you're allowed to spend on screens after school, talk to an adult about what a healthy amount might be for you. Then set a timer on the device so you know when to put it down.
- 2. Do other activities first.** Try to leave screen time for after you've completed other things you want to do. This could include responsibilities like homework and chores but also fun things like getting outside.
- 3. Check in with yourself.** Think about how time on your device makes you feel. If you ever find yourself upset about something you see online, it's time to talk to a trusted adult. This also may be an indicator that you should have a few screen-free days.



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); ALAMY (3)



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

SAVE MORE WATER

Water is a natural resource that all living things (including plants, animals, and humans) need to survive. That's why it's important not to waste it. Start by taking simple steps in the bathroom. Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth and consider taking short showers instead of longer ones. Next, ask an adult to help you look around for other ways you might be unintentionally wasting water, such as a leaky faucet or a toilet that won't stop running. Repairing them will reduce your water usage. Finally, consider the water you use outside. If you have a garden, try watering it with a watering can this spring, which is more efficient than using sprinklers.



Always turn off the tap.

How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Americans eat an average of 26 pounds of rice every year.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Make veggie miso fried rice

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon brown miso paste
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 small carrots, diced (about ½ cup)
- 1 small head broccoli, cut into small florets (about 1 cup)
- ½ cup frozen peas, thawed
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 4 cups cold leftover white rice
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 scallions, finely sliced, for garnish

Instructions

- Combine the miso, soy sauce, water, sesame oil, and garlic in a small bowl and mix well. Set aside.
- Heat two tablespoons of vegetable oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and carrots and cook, stirring, for two minutes. Add the broccoli and peas and stir-fry for three more minutes.
- Push vegetables to one side and add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the pan. Pour in the egg and scramble, breaking it into pieces with a spoon.
- Add the rice and stir to combine with the vegetables and egg. Pour in the prepared sauce and mix well to coat. Cook until rice is heated through, about one more minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- Divide rice among bowls and top with the sliced scallions. Serve immediately. Makes four servings.



WOW!

There are more than 88,000 pre-K, elementary, and middle schools in the US.

How to...



Make a difference at school

Simple steps can help you get involved and have fun working with others.

Besides being a great place to learn, school offers a great opportunity to make friends, try new things, and give back to others. At this point in the school year, there is plenty of time for you to take advantage of opportunities and activities that your school offers. It's also a good time to think of ways to make a difference and improve your school. Here's how to get started.

Reach out

One option for learning more about what happens around your school is to be involved in activities, clubs, and teams. All of these help you to meet more people, including teachers and staff, who can give you an idea of needs your school might have. For example, get to know your student council or government. Ask if you can attend meetings to share ideas and listen to what others want to change at school. (Maybe you'll even be inspired to run for a position in your school's next election!) If your school has a student newspaper, check it out or consider joining the staff to know more about what is happening at school.

Start something new

Your school may have a variety clubs—from robotics to anime to chess. If you and some of your classmates have an interest that's not covered by a current school club, you could consider forming your own. Many

schools have a standard process for approving clubs, which may include asking a teacher to advise the club, filling out paperwork with an adult's help, and finding a place and time to meet.

Identify a need and take action

Think about what makes you feel happy at school. For instance, maybe you enjoy having lunch, playing soccer at recess, or taking an art class. Now think about ways those activities could be even better. You might wish there were more fresh food options in the cafeteria. Perhaps your school could use more soccer balls for students to use at recess or you would like to see more artwork on display. Once you have your idea, talk to an adult on staff to see if students could help. You could offer to organize a bake sale to buy sports equipment, develop a plan for a school garden that can contribute to meals, or launch a group project to paint a hallway mural.

Be kind

It may seem simple, but you can help create a positive atmosphere at school by being kind and respectful to others. This includes respecting a teacher's rules, saying thank you when a student helps you, cleaning up any mess you make, and saying hello to others in the hallway. A good attitude is contagious!



Try painting a hallway mural.

4 organizations that value learning

These groups ensure that teachers and students have the resources they need.

DonorsChoose

On this group's website, teachers can upload lists of classroom supplies they need. Donors can then help cover costs by contributing money so teachers can buy the supplies. donorschoose.org

DONORS CHOOSE

Kids in Need Foundation



This group offers free resource centers that educators can

visit to get needed classroom supplies. Teachers can also get help with lesson plans for their classrooms. kinf.org

Operation Backpack

People who volunteer with this organization collect and distribute backpacks filled with essential school supplies to thousands of students in need every year. voa.org/operation-backpack

OPERATION BACKPACK
Helping kids in need succeed

Teach for America



Many schools don't have enough teachers. This

group trains college graduates so they can become teachers where the need is greatest. teachforamerica.org

GETTY IMAGES (2); DONORS CHOOSE; KIDS IN NEED FOUNDATION; OPERATION BACKPACK; TEACH FOR AMERICA

What's great about your school?

Name: _____

Age: _____

Grade: _____

What's a fun event or activity at your school? What makes it special?

What do you think makes your school stand out?

Draw a picture of one of your favorite school memories from this year.

To share this form with us, ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities. We will publish some submissions in future issues. (By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.)



How to...

PUPPY LOVE

More than 27 million households in the US give their dogs Valentine's Day presents.



Craft Valentine's Day cards

Give friends and family a homemade surprise for the holiday.

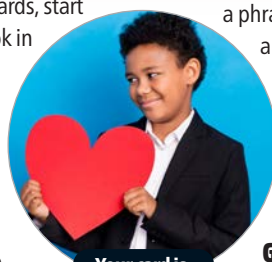
Valentine's Day offers a great opportunity to show special people in your life — whether friends, siblings, parents, or other relatives — that you care about them. One way to mark the occasion is to give Valentine's Day cards. Homemade cards can be especially fun to share because you can personalize them to make your friends and family feel extra loved. Here's how to get started.

Gather supplies

Instead of buying new supplies for your cards, start with what you already have at home. Look in your craft area for colorful paper, stickers, markers, ribbons, and glitter. You can also use upcycled or recycled supplies, such as flyers you've gotten in the mail or colorful packaging from items you've purchased. This is a good time to think about how many cards you want to make so you can be sure you have enough supplies.

Start with a base

First, choose a piece of cardstock (thicker paper) or construction paper. You can pick a classic Valentine's Day color, like pink or red, or any shade you prefer. Fold it in half to make a card with a front and an inside. Or cut the paper into a shape (like a heart) to make a flat card with designs on the front and back. To cut the card into a heart, fold the paper in half first and then trace half a heart toward the folded edge. Next, use scissors to cut along the pencil line. Unfold your paper to reveal a heart shape.



Your card is your canvas.

Add a note

Once you have the shape of your card ready, write a message on it. You can write a longer note about why you appreciate the person you're giving the card to, include an inside joke, or write out a Valentine's Day saying. For example, you could write "Our friendship is blooming" and then decorate your card with flowers. Or perhaps the recipient of your card loves a certain animal, such as an owl. You can come up with a phrase that connects to that, such as "You're a hoot." You can brainstorm ideas for this on your own or ask an adult to help you look up lists of "Valentine's Day puns" online. If you find a saying you like, you can use it for inspiration to decorate the rest of the card.

Get crafty

Once you have your basic card and message, it's time to add your own design touches. One option is to layer on more shapes cut from paper. Use fun craft scissors (like waves or zigzags) to cut out hearts, stars, or other shapes of various sizes and glue them onto the card, either layered on top of one another or in different spots. Or, if you prefer, you can decorate the card with stickers, glued-on gems, or your own drawings. You could also print out a photo of the two of you together and glue it inside. For a finishing touch, add a border around the card's edge using a marker or gluing down ribbon. If you like, you could even tape a small candy or toy to the card.

4 fun facts about valentine candy

Many people like to give candy as a gift on Valentine's Day. Find out more about this sweet tradition.

So much chocolate

The first heart-shaped candy boxes were produced for Valentine's Day in 1861. Today, more than 36 million boxes containing more than 58 million pounds of chocolate are sold every year.



Something to talk about



Conversation hearts, another popular candy for the holiday, were originally produced in the 1800s on a machine that was intended to make throat lozenges. In 1866, the company started printing sayings on the candies. More than 8 billion conversation hearts are made each year.

Favorite gift

Although roses are a popular Valentine's Day gift, one study found that 69% of Americans would prefer to be given chocolates instead of flowers. And when it comes to a box of chocolates, caramels are the most popular flavor.



A kind gesture

In Japan, only women hand out chocolates or other gifts on Valentine's Day. They give them to the important men in their life, including relatives and coworkers, to show appreciation. A month later, on March 14, it's the men's turn to give gifts to the women in their lives.



How to...

FUN FACT

The largest freestanding rock is believed to be in Landers, California, and is seven stories high.



Make paperweights from rocks

What you need

- Small, smooth rocks
- Paint
- Paintbrushes
- Scissors
- Colored paper
- Recycled wrapping paper or newspaper
- Craft punches in different shapes (optional)
- Glue
- Small plate or bowl
- Acrylic matte or gloss medium (optional)

Instructions

1. Wash your rocks with soap and water and allow them to dry completely.
2. To create painted paperweights, use a paintbrush to paint designs on the rocks such as hearts, rainbows, and initials. Let dry.
3. To decorate rocks with a paper collage, first use scissors to cut out a variety of small shapes, like hearts or rainbows, from colored or recycled paper. If you have a heart-shaped craft punch, you could also use that to make heart shapes.
4. Squeeze a little glue onto a plate or bowl. Use a paintbrush to brush a thin layer of glue onto the back of the paper shape and adhere it to a rock.
5. Once the paint or glue is dry, you may want to make your paperweights a little shiny and add a protective coating. If so, brush on a coat of acrylic matte or gloss medium. Let the rocks completely dry. Now your personalized paperweights are ready to be handed out to your family and friends as gifts!

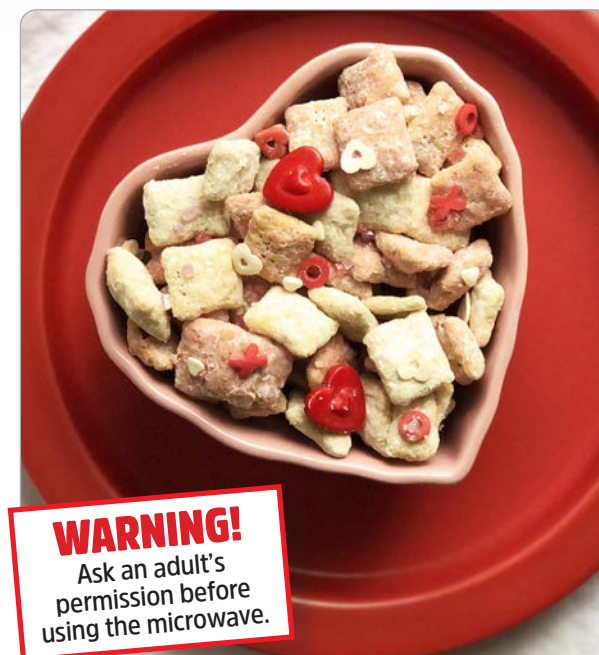
Mix up a crunchy snack

Ingredients

- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 8 cups rice or corn Chex cereal
- 1¾ cups powdered sugar
- ½ cup freeze-dried strawberries, crushed into powder
- 1 cup assorted red/pink sprinkles and/or other pink and red candies

Instructions

1. Combine the peanut butter, white chocolate chips, and butter in a large microwave-safe bowl. Heat in microwave for 30-second intervals at 50% power, stirring after each, until melted and smooth. Stir in the vanilla.
2. Add the Chex cereal to mixture and toss gently to coat. Set aside and let cool for 10 minutes. Spoon half of the Chex mixture into a large zip-top bag and add 1 cup of the powdered sugar. Seal the bag and toss to coat. Let cool completely.
3. In a separate zip-top bag, combine the remaining ¾ cup powdered sugar and the crushed strawberry powder and shake to mix. Add the remaining coated Chex mixture and toss to coat in the sugar and strawberry powder mixture. Let cool completely.
4. Combine all the Chex cereal in a large bowl. Add the sprinkles and/or other candy and toss to combine. Makes about 9 cups.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the microwave.

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Drawing out a fact or idea, instead of simply writing it down, can help you remember it, research has shown.

Prepare for a test

These strategies can help you feel confident about demonstrating your knowledge.

In your school, tests or quizzes may be a part of your regular classroom work. Many teachers use tests to ensure that students have accurately learned the material that's been studied. If taking a test makes you feel worried, the good news is that there are many easy ways for you to prepare and feel better before the exam or quiz. Here's how to get started.

Be organized

Studying for a test will be easier if you organize your notes, handouts, and assignments ahead of time for each of your classes. This way, the information will be there for you when you need to review it. Consider using a separate folder or binder for each subject. You can keep them at home, at school, or in your backpack.

Make a plan

Once you have a test date, ask an adult to help you look at a calendar and make a plan for when you'll study. This might mean committing to studying for 30 minutes for a few afternoons the week before the test. Or maybe you have more time on the weekends and want to plan extra study time then. No matter what you decide, block out the time on your calendar so you remember.

Focus on the right material

If you have learned a lot of material, such as in science class, ask your teacher what information will be on the test. If your teacher hands out a study

guide, use that guide to help you figure out what information you need to focus on most. Next, decide how you want to review the material. Besides reviewing your notes (see box at right), you could write key concepts on flash cards to test yourself. Write the question on one side of the note card and the answer on the other. If there is some information in your notes or in the study guide that is confusing to you, highlight that part and ask your teacher for clarification when you get to class.

Use smart strategies

As the day of the test approaches, be sure to get plenty of sleep the night before and eat a healthy breakfast on the test day. You don't want to be distracted by hunger pangs during the test! When you sit down to take the exam, give yourself a few minutes to review the entire test. You can start by answering the first question, but you can also consider working on questions in a later section that you find easier to answer. For multiple-choice questions, cross off answers that you know are incorrect. If you still have more than one answer left, move on to the next question. The correct answer may come to you later. Finally, if you finish the test before class ends, instead of turning your test in right away, go back and review all your answers to check for any mistakes. You've got this!

4 ways to take good notes

The notes you write in class are an important resource to have for studying. Here's how to take better ones.

Focus on main ideas

Don't worry about writing down every single thing your teacher says. Instead, focus on the main points of the lesson, including key words, phrases, and summaries.



Add color and symbols

You can use a highlighter to go over any notes that cover the most important points your teacher made. If there are words or concepts you want to know more about, circle them and follow up later.



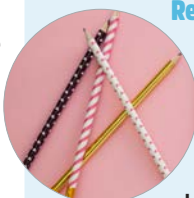
Get clarification

If you're worried that you missed a point, ask your teacher to repeat it. Or put a star or sticky note next to that information and ask about it later.



Redo as needed

If you feel your notes are messy or could be organized better, rewrite them in a notebook or type them up on a computer. Rewriting can help you retain information better, too.



SWAP SOUP WITH FRIENDS

Many people enjoy the cozy feeling of making and eating soup in the winter. One way to try several different kinds of soup is to have an exchange with friends. Here's how to do it.

- 1. Invite friends.** To start, ask a grown-up if you can invite a few friends or families over to swap soup. Choose a day and time, and ask each person to bring a large container of homemade soup, as well as copies of the recipe.
- 2. Do a taste test.** At the swap, have an adult help you heat up the soups. Pass out small bowls and spoons to guests, and ladle a little soup into their bowls for taste tests. To reduce waste, ask everyone to rinse their bowl and spoon in between servings.
- 3. Choose a soup.** Once everyone has tasted the soups, it's time to trade. You can do this a couple of ways: Each participant can choose a single container of soup to bring home, or you can pass out small containers for people to fill with different options.



How to...



CLEAN SLATE

Before erasers were invented in the 1700s, moist bread was used to get rid of pencil marks.



Make cards with eraser stamps

What you need

- Shapes to trace, like coins, small blocks, and board game pieces (optional)
- White erasers
- Ruler (optional)
- Pencil
- Scissors and/or craft knife (with adult supervision)
- Different-color ink pads
- Blank cards
- Pencil with a new eraser
- Cotton swabs
- Markers, string, and glue (optional)

Instructions

- 1.** Decide on some basic shapes to create, such as circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, half circles, and thin rectangles (for stripes and lines).
- 2.** Use the items you've collected to trace shapes onto the white erasers or draw your shapes freehand onto the erasers.
- 3.** Cut out the eraser shapes with scissors. These are your stamps!
- 4.** Press an eraser shape onto an ink pad a few times, making sure the eraser is evenly inked. Then press the inked side of the eraser firmly onto a card.
- 5.** To add dot decorations, press a small eraser top of a pencil into the ink pad and then stamp it onto your card.

- 6.** You can use eraser shapes you cut out to make patterns or to create animals, food, balloons, flowers, faces, or anything you would like on your card. Experiment with layering shapes and interesting compositions.
- 7.** Cut one tip off a cotton swab and use the cut end to stamp tiny dots, such as for eyes or cactus needles, onto your card.
- 8.** Add thin lines to your card by drawing them on with a marker or gluing on thin string.
- 9.** At any time, if you'd like to change colors, wipe your stamp clean with a damp paper towel. Dry it off and then press it into a new ink color.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

If there's a new book you'd like to read, go to your town or school library to see if you can borrow a copy before you buy one. Checking out library books is good for the Earth because you are helping to reduce the natural resources required to make new items. Using the library also helps reduce waste. Once you are finished reading a book, many other people can borrow it instead of purchasing their own copies. You may also discover that the library offers a wider variety of items and activities than you realized, such as puzzles to check out or book clubs to attend. Or you may just find the library to be a relaxing place to read and discover new books!



What will you read first?



How to...

INSTANT INFORMATION
About 93% of adults get at least some of their news from online sources.



Be a wise reader

Evaluating the news for accuracy is a valuable life skill.

Reading about people, events, and happenings in the news is a great way to learn about the world around you. As you read, it's important to evaluate the content for accuracy. This is known as practicing news literacy, which is the ability to "think critically about the news so you can understand what information is fact and what is not," Erin Olson of the News Literacy Project told *The Week Junior*. In honor of National News Literacy Week, taking place from January 23 to 27 this year, here are some steps to follow when deciphering information.

Identify what you're reading

First, aim to identify what type of information you're reading. A news article should present both sides of a story, with sources or quotes from people that back those statements up. This type of story differs from an opinion article, which is typically when one person gives their point of view on a topic. Opinion stories can be great to read, but it's important to know that they may present only one side of a story.

Analyze an article's purpose

The purpose of a news article is to give readers the facts of an occurrence. It is not trying to convince a reader to believe something. This makes the story credible. If both sides of an occurrence are shared, you know the writer is not trying to keep information from you or change your

opinion. Other articles may try to get you to believe something, such as why you should support a cause. That doesn't mean you shouldn't read those stories. They can be interesting. What's important is that you realize stories can have different purposes. Knowing a story's purpose can help you interpret it.

Compare articles

If you're reading a news story but are wondering if it's presenting all the facts accurately, you can try doing some "lateral reading." This is when you read about the same topic from a different news source. Are those stories similar with the same facts presented? Or does one story leave out some facts or tell only one side? You'll have to read closely, since each news source may cover a subject in a slightly different way and still be accurate. By reading a few different articles you should get a fair idea of what happened.

Do a quick search

To verify that a news company is reputable, learn more about it. A media outlet that aims to present unbiased news will most likely have a mission statement in the "About" section of its website, which should include the organization's purpose and guidelines about fairness and accuracy. You can learn more about news literacy at newsliit.org.



The facts matter.

A short history of newspapers

Newspapers have helped people learn about the world for centuries. Check out these important historical dates.

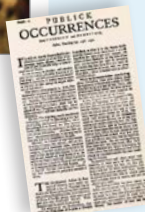
1440: The first printing press

The invention of the printing press in Europe allowed for the news to be printed faster and easier, and therefore distributed to more people, than ever before.



1690: The first US newspaper

The first US newspaper was published in 1690, when America was under British rule.



But it included controversial topics and was forced to close after one issue. Soon after that, other newspaper companies launched and became successful.

1846: The first news association

The Associated Press, which is a top news source today, was formed in 1846. It began when a few large newspapers across the country decided to share information.

AP

1896: The first comic strip



As more US newspapers were founded, they had to compete for readers. Some started to include more entertainment features, including comic strips.



How to...

GO STARGAZING THIS WINTER

Winter is an ideal time to look at stars because the cooler temperatures make the sky clearer. Follow these steps.

- 1. Make a plan.** The best time to stargaze is on a clear (not cloudy) night during the new Moon phase. In this phase, the Moon isn't visible, making the sky extra dark. Check the calendar at stardate.org for the next new Moon, which happens about once a month.
- 2. Head outside.** Have an adult help you find a spot to stargaze that's away from light pollution, such as streetlights and neon signs. Bring along a telescope or binoculars if you have them.
- 3. Look up.** The brightest objects to look for first are other planets. Venus is especially vibrant and will look like an extra large star in the western sky right after sunset. Next, spot some constellations, such as the seven-star Big Dipper. You can also go to in-the-sky.org to print out a planisphere (map of the stars) to help you find constellations.



ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4); ASSOCIATED PRESS



WOW!
The largest bowl of soup ever prepared was made in the Netherlands in 2009 and contained more than 7,000 gallons of veggie stew.

WARNING!
Ask an adult before using a knife, oven, stovetop, and blender for this recipe.

Make creamy potato soup

Ingredients

- 2 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled
- 1 small head of cauliflower, trimmed and broken into small florets (about 5 cups)
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Green onion, thinly sliced (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F and line a large baking sheet with foil. Cut the potatoes into 1-inch pieces. Toss the potatoes, cauliflower, and garlic cloves with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil on the prepared baking sheet. Season generously with salt and pepper and roast in the oven until golden and tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a large pot, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-low. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until tender and beginning to caramelize. This should take about 20 minutes.
3. Set aside about ½ cup of the roasted cauliflower florets for garnish. Add the remaining roasted vegetables to the pot with the onions and pour in the vegetable broth. Bring mixture to a simmer, then cover and cook for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
4. Using an immersion blender, standard blender, or food processor, purée the soup and butter together until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Serve bowls of the soup topped with the reserved roasted cauliflower, thinly sliced green onions (if desired), and more freshly ground pepper. Makes 4 to 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK BUY NOTHING FOR ONE MONTH

Thinking carefully before you buy new items can help the planet. That's because anything people purchase—from clothes to toys to decorations—requires natural resources and causes pollution when they're produced. Extra purchases can also end up discarded in landfills. One way to help is for you and your family to try a "Buy Nothing Month." This means that you challenge yourselves to avoid purchasing new items for a whole month. Groceries and food can be bought as usual. Or try it for a week if a month feels too difficult. Taking on this challenge will not only help the Earth, but it may also help you buy only what you truly need.

Except for food, try to avoid making purchases.





SWEET DREAMS

More than 33% of adults said they sleep with a comfort item, such as a stuffed animal or blanket.

How to...



Sleep away from home

These tips will help you feel confident at sleepovers and other overnight trips.

If you have a sleepover at a friend's house coming up, you may feel both excited and unsure. That's because even though you know you'll have fun, it can be hard to be away from your routine at home. The good news is that there are simple steps you can take to prepare yourself. Here's how to get started.

Take a bit of home with you

Besides packing pajamas and a toothbrush, you may want to include an item that will make the bed or sleeping bag where you'll be sleeping feel more like home. This might include items like your pillow, a special blanket, a stuffed animal, or a book. If you're going to be staying away for a longer period of time, such as traveling with a club or team to a competition or going to a sleepaway camp this summer, you could take photos of your family and pets with you. Looking at them can remind you of everyone who cares about you.

Get set up

When you arrive at the sleepover, ask where you'll be sleeping and place your comfort items there. You can put your toothbrush in the bathroom so you feel settled when it's time to go to bed. Next, take a look around the area where you're staying. Look for the light switch so you know where it is if you need it

later. Ask if there's a night light, if you'd like one. Find out where the bathroom is located. Getting settled when you arrive allows you to solve any worries you have so you can start having fun.

Start slowly

If you haven't stayed away from home very often or in a long time, consider first having a sleepover where you already feel comfortable. This could be with a family member, such as a cousin, or a best friend. A run-through can be especially helpful if you have a larger event—like an overnight field trip or sleepover party—coming up. Ask a parent if they can help you schedule a practice sleepover.

Ease homesickness

Even if you take these steps, you might still feel homesick when you're away. Homesickness is when you feel sad, or just not like yourself, because you miss your family and the familiarity of your own home. This is a common feeling. One way to help ease homesickness is to talk with a trusted adult. Before you go, ask your parent to give a heads-up to your friend's parent that you may feel homesick during the sleepover. Then, if you do, you know you have someone you can talk to. You may wind up not feeling homesick after all, but at least you were prepared!



Try sleeping outdoors, too.

4 games to try at a sleepover

These activities will have you laughing and smiling while you play them.

Flashlight tag

Turn out the lights in a large room. One player gets a flashlight and tries to find all the other players while they hide. The last player to be spotted with the flashlight wins.



Sleeping beauty

One person snuggles up and pretends to be asleep.

Start a timer, then see how long it takes for everyone else to get them to laugh with silly jokes, noises, and more.

Glow bowling

Fill 10 plastic water bottles halfway with water, add a glowstick to each one, and screw on the caps. Set the bottles up in a triangle. Then turn the lights out and see who can knock them down by rolling a soccer ball.



Pillow fight

In an open space, set a timer for one minute. At the count of three, have all the guests begin gently tossing pillows at one another. (Be sure to aim below the shoulders.)



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Lunar New Year, which marks the start of the calendar year in many cultures around the world, starts on January 22 this year.



Cherry blossoms, a sign of new beginnings, are often used to decorate for Lunar New Year.

Celebrate Lunar New Year with a craft

What you need

- Tissue paper
- Pencil
- Round items to trace in a few sizes, such as coins, a spice jar lid, or a small juice cup
- Scissors
- Dull pencil
- Hot glue and gun (with adult supervision) or white glue
- Small branches with no leaves
- Small recycled jars, bottles, or vases

Instructions

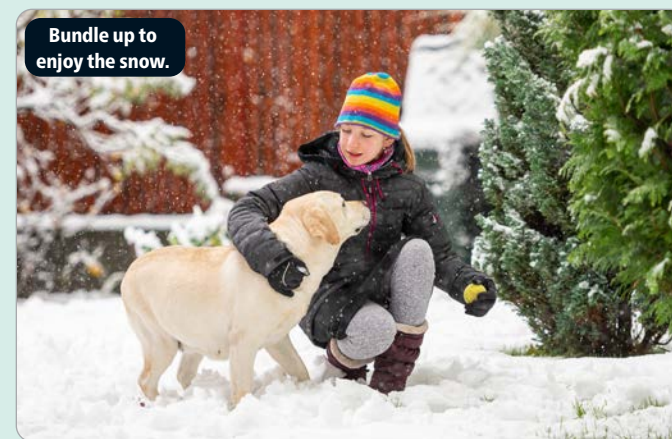
1. Stack a few pieces of tissue paper together and, with a pencil, trace a variety of circles onto it using the round items. Cut the circles out, making sure to cut a few layers of the tissue circles at a time.
2. Take two circles of the same size and gently push the dull point of the pencil down into the center so the circle's edges come up and the center is pushed down.
3. Remove the pencil. Twist the pointy bottom of the tissue paper, created by the pencil, from underneath so the two layers are twisted together at the center. Pinch the pointy bottom with your fingernails and twist more until the layers are really twisted together. You've made a blossom!
4. While holding the twisted bottom securely, use your fingers to separate the layers of tissue paper to open up the petals if you'd like.
5. Repeat to make as many blossoms as you'd like.
6. Adhere the blossoms all over the branches, gluing the smaller blossoms to the tips of the branches and adding larger ones to the thicker part of the branch. Leave the thicker end of the branch free of petals, since you will place that part into a container.
7. Display your cherry blossom branches standing up in small jars, bottles, or vases.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK SPEND MORE TIME OUTSIDE THIS YEAR

Being outdoors—whether playing in the snow or going to a playground—has many benefits. It can boost your mood, help you stay more active, and give you an appreciation for the natural world. This year, consider making a commitment to spend more time outdoors. You can do this on your own or with friends and family. For instance, you could try walking to school more often or asking your teacher if you can go outside for recess, even when it's chilly out. You can also consider joining the 1,000 Hours Outside Challenge. The aim is to spend 1,000 hours outside, and people worldwide have tried it. Find out more at 1000hoursoutside.com.

Bundle up to enjoy the snow.





How to...

WOW!

On December 31, more than one billion people worldwide watch the ball drop in New York City on TV.



Reflect on your year

Mark the end of 2022 with a fun and interesting activity.

The end of the year is a time when many people reflect on their life over the past 12 months, as well as look to the future. It can be fun to reminisce about awesome things that happened, interesting things you did, fun places you went, and goals you accomplished. Reviewing your past year can also help you start to consider what you might like to try doing in 2023. Here are some ways to mark 2022 before you ring in a fresh new year.

Compile a review

At the end of the year, many newspapers, magazines, and websites create a “Year in Review” that rounds up the most popular news stories they published. (We’re doing that in this issue of *The Week Junior*!) Consider creating your own version by writing down the year’s key events in your life. You can use the form on the page at right to jot down your thoughts about the year. If you’d like, you can share it with your family.

Create a top 10

A top 10 list is a fun way to recall the absolute best moments of your year. You can probably think of a few off the top of your head. If you get stuck, try scrolling

through photos on a parent’s phone starting in January 2022. You might come across a proud moment or an exciting event that you forgot about. Besides creating your own top 10 list, consider asking family members to make their lists to share.

Write yourself a letter

If you would like to work through more personal thoughts about how your year went, writing a letter to your future self could be a great option. After you’ve written the letter, seal it in an envelope and write the date you want to open it on the front. You can choose to open it six months from now, a year from now, or in a few years. When you open the envelope, it will be interesting to see how you’ve changed and grown.

Make a scrapbook

Commemorate your year by letting your creativity shine through. Using a notebook, glue down photos from the past year that remind you of some of your best moments. Add captions using colorful markers. Then decorate the pages with paint, stickers, and items you cut and glue on from newspapers and magazines to make the scrapbook extra special.



Highlight your wins.

4 ways to ring in the new year

Celebrate the beginning of 2023 with one of these clever ideas.

Let in fresh air

On New Year’s Eve, many cultures around the world open a window at the stroke of midnight to let out the old year’s air, usher in the new air, and bring good luck.



Wish for something

On sticky notes, write down what you hope will happen in 2023—for yourself, your family, or the world. Then stick them on a bulletin board or bedroom wall where you can read them for inspiration.

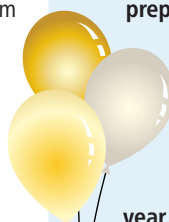
Set a goal

Challenge yourself to learn something new in 2023. For example, if you want to learn to cook, you could offer to help your family prepare dinner every Friday night in January. You could help choose the recipe, grocery shop for the ingredients, and then do the prep and cooking.



Show gratitude

Write “2023” on a jar. When good things happen throughout the year, note them on slips of paper and put them in the jar. Set aside time in December 2023 to read them and reflect on the year you had.



GETTY IMAGES; ON RIGHT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



My 2022 Memories

Name _____

Age _____

Grade _____

What is your favorite memory of 2022?

What are you most proud of when you think back on 2022?

What is something that surprised you about 2022?

Draw a picture of yourself doing something memorable in 2022.



How to...

Create fun and easy crafts

These were the projects our readers said they most enjoyed making in 2022.



CARDBOARD TUBE ELEPHANT

What you need

- Paper towel tube
- Scissors
- Craft knife
- Black marker or paint
- Hot glue, white glue, or adhesive dots

Instructions

1. Print out the elephant template from tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ElephantCraft. Follow the template's instructions to trace the elephant onto a paper towel tube and cut it out.
2. With an adult's help, use a craft knife to carefully saw into the tube for the ears. Fold the ears forward. Paint or draw on eyes with a marker.
3. To make the legs, cut a 1/2-inch ring off another paper towel tube. Cut the ring in half. Glue the legs under the elephant's torso. For a baby elephant, shorten the torso length and cut the legs shorter.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or hot glue.

Reprinted with permission from *Toilet Tube Treasury* by Jodi Levine, a SuperMakelt book, ©2022

COLORFUL WOVEN BRACELETS

What you need

- 3 straws
- Tape, such as masking tape
- Large ball of yarn (or several balls if you'd like to use different colors)
- Scissors
- Wooden skewer

Instructions

1. Place the 3 straws together, side by side. Tape the 3 straws together at the top.
2. Cut three 20-inch pieces of yarn. Thread one piece through each straw, using the skewer to push it down until you can pull the other end out.
3. Knot the 3 pieces of yarn together at the taped end of the straws, leaving about 4 inches of yarn coming out of the top. Tape that end of the straw loom to the table, which will keep it steady as you weave.
4. Cut a piece of yarn, as long as you'd like, for your first color.
5. Tie one end of your yarn around the straw all the way to the left, below where it's taped down.
6. Start weaving: Use the loose end of yarn to go under the middle straw, then over the right straw. Loop your yarn back under the right straw and then over the middle straw and under the left straw. Now go over the left straw and continue weaving until you run out of yarn or want to switch colors.
7. Cut another piece of yarn, in a different color if you like, and tie it to the end of your original piece of yarn. Continue weaving.
8. When you have made your bracelet long enough to fit around your wrist, finish the row and knot the loose yarn end onto the middle woven loop.
9. Remove the tape holding the loom down as well as the one holding the straws together.
10. Holding the 3 straws, gently slide the bracelet off the straws toward the knotted end.
11. Tie the 3 loose ends into a double knot.
12. Have someone help you tie the 2 ends to form a bracelet around your wrist. You can leave it long enough to slip it on and off, if you prefer.



How to



DID YOU KNOW?

Washi tape, a crafting material that originated in Japan, is made of rice paper.

WASHI TAPE NOTEBOOK

What you need

- Washi tape in assorted colors and sizes
- Solid-colored notebooks or journals
- Scissors
- Black permanent marker

Instructions

1. To make stripes: Cut pieces of tape that are a little longer than the notebook. Stick them to the front, folding the extra over the cover.
2. To make a burger: Cut a piece of yellow tape that's a few inches long to make the top of the bun. Place it on your notebook. Next, add slightly smaller strips of washi tape for other items on your burger, like pickles, lettuce, tomato, and meat. Finish with more yellow tape for the bottom bun. Snip tiny rectangles to make sesame seeds for the top bun. Spell out your name in tape letters too.
3. To make flowers: For tulips, overlap short pieces of tape to form V shapes. Make daisies by crisscrossing 3 or 4 pieces of tape. Add long strips of green tape for stems and diamond-shaped green pieces for leaves.
4. To make a dog: Place one long strip of tape on the notebook for the animal's body. Add 2 thinner pieces, overlapping at an angle, for the snout. Use a small square on top for the head. Cut thin pieces of tape to make the tail and legs, and a rectangle with one slanted edge for the ear. Draw on the nose and eye.

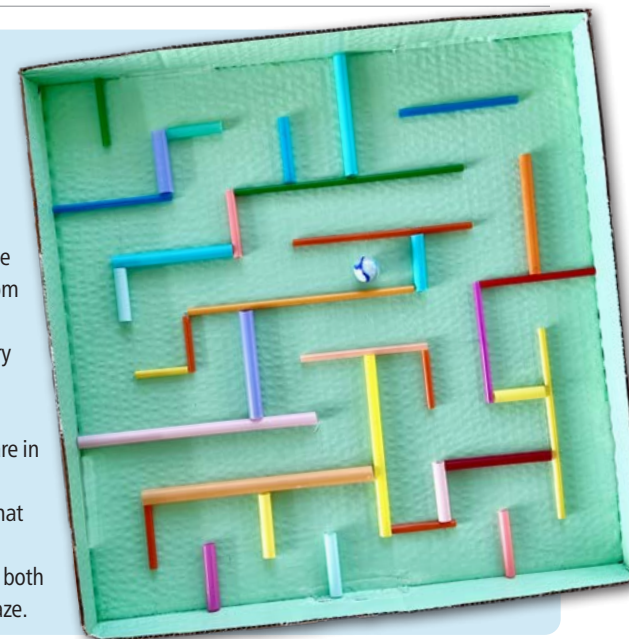
STRAW MARBLE MAZE

What you need

- Recycled square pizza box
- Scissors
- Paint
- Paintbrush
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Straws
- Tacky white glue or hot glue
- Glass marble

Instructions

1. With an adult's help, cut off the top flap of the pizza box so you have a large square piece of cardboard with short sides.
2. Paint the inside of the box, including the sides. Let dry.
3. Using a ruler and pencil, draw a grid on the painted part of the box with nine evenly spaced lines going from top to the bottom and another nine lines going across.
4. Design a maze on the grid. First, select one square as the entry point of the maze and one as the exit. Use a pencil to draw a path between the entry and exit squares. Remember to add some turns and dead ends. Erase the original grid lines that are in the way of your path, as well as the path line you drew.
5. Cut pieces of straws to the different lengths of the grid lines that are left on the maze. Glue them on top of the pencil lines.
6. Place a marble in the start square and then hold the box with both hands. Gently tilt the box to direct the marble through the maze.



AMY GROPP FORBES; JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMAKELT; ON RIGHT PAGE: JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMAKELT



**BONUS
ACTIVITY
SECTION**

How to...

Make the year's top recipes

Breakfast, lunch, dessert, and a drink—these are the culinary creations kids loved most.

KITCHEN SINK BARS

Ingredients

- Parchment paper or foil
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces bittersweet chocolate
- ½ cup broken pretzel pieces
- ½ cup potato chip pieces
- ¼ cup toffee bits (such as Heath)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F and line a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with parchment or foil. Allow it to overhang on two sides.
2. Using an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugars until light and fluffy, scraping down the sides as needed, about 5 minutes. Add the eggs and vanilla, and beat one minute more.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, cornstarch, and salt.
4. With the mixer on low, add the dry ingredients and mix until combined. Chop the chocolate and fold it into the batter. Add the pretzels, potato chips, and toffee bits, reserving a sprinkling of each for the top.
5. Spread the batter in the baking dish and top with reserved chocolate, pretzels, potato chips, and toffee bits. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, until the edges are golden and set and the center is still slightly wobbly. Cut into 12 squares when cool.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a mixer, oven, or stovetop for any of these recipes.

BREAKFAST FRITTATAS

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 4 slices bacon, chopped
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 10 eggs
- 6 tablespoons heavy cream
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 375° F. While it preheats, coat 10 wells of a muffin tin with cooking spray.
2. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until crisp, about 4 minutes. Drain on a plate lined with a paper towel, then toss in a small bowl with the shredded cheddar cheese.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, heavy cream, pepper, and salt.
4. Evenly distribute half of the bacon and cheese mixture into the 10 muffin wells. Add the egg mixture to the wells, filling each about two-thirds full. Sprinkle the remaining bacon mixture and parsley on top.
5. Bake the frittatas until they are set in the center, about 15 minutes. Let cool slightly before removing from the pan. Serves 5, with 2 frittatas per person.

FRIED OR SCRAMBLED?
The average American eats about 279 eggs every year.



How to

ANCIENT PASTA

The oldest known recipe for macaroni and cheese was found in an Italian cookbook from the 1300s.



EASY MAC AND CHEESE

Ingredients

- ¾ pound rotini pasta
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 2 ¼ cups shredded cheddar
- ½ cup shredded Gruyère cheese
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 ¼ cups whole milk
- ¼ cup unsalted butter
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour

Instructions

1. Boil the pasta according to the package directions. Once done, drain it and set it aside.
2. While the pasta cooks, combine the smoked paprika, salt, and a few grinds of pepper in a small bowl. In another bowl, toss together all the cheeses. Place the milk in a liquid measuring cup and have it ready.
3. In a large heavy pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the flour and whisk to combine. Slowly whisk in the milk a half-cup at a time, continuing to stir until the sauce is smooth. Add in the spice

- mixture and stir to combine. Lower the heat slightly and continue to whisk constantly until the mixture has thickened and has the consistency of thick gravy.
4. Turn off the heat and add the cheese mixture a few handfuls at a time, whisking until the cheese in the pot is melted before adding another handful. Add the pasta and stir to coat completely. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

SWEET SLUSHIES

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups strawberries
- 2 lemons, halved
- 3 tablespoons fine sugar
- 2 cups ice

Instructions

1. Carefully use a knife to trim the strawberries, cutting off the green tops. Then cut each strawberry in half (or into four pieces if they are large strawberries). Place the strawberries in a blender.
2. Use a peeler to cut a 1-by-3-inch piece of lemon zest off the bright yellow rind of one lemon.
3. Squeeze the juice from three of the lemon halves into a small bowl. Measure out ¼ cup of the lemon juice and pour it into the blender. Add the strip of lemon zest to the blender.
4. Add the sugar and ice to the blender. Cover and purée until the mixture is fully blended. Divide mixture between 2 glasses.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using a knife and blender.





How to...

ANCIENT SPORT

Ice skating is believed to have been invented in northern Europe around 1000 BCE.



Try out ice skating

This winter sport is a fun way to stay active in the colder weather.

Ice skating is a popular winter activity. More than 9 million people in the US glide around the ice at least once a year. You don't need much more than a pair of ice skates to participate. The activity provides great exercise and can be lots of fun to do with friends and family. Here's how to get started.

Choose your skates

The two main types of ice skates are figure skates and hockey skates. They have slightly different blades at the bottom, but beginners can use either one to skate around a rink. Most skating rinks rent out skates for a small fee, or you could borrow a pair from a friend or relative. If you think you may be skating regularly, you could talk to an adult about whether it's worth buying a pair, either new or from a secondhand sports store.



Hockey skates are one option.

Follow guidelines

Experts suggest wearing a helmet when you go ice skating. Many people wear a ski or snowboarding helmet or a bike helmet. Elbow and knee pads will provide protection if you fall on the ice. Even if the rink is indoors, you may want to wear gloves to keep your hands warm. It's smart to dress in layers. That way, if you start to heat up from all the skating, you

can take a layer off without getting cold. Obey all the rules of the rink to protect yourself and others from accidents. Never skate on a frozen pond unless it has been cleared for safety and adults are present.

Find your balance

First, get comfortable being on the ice. Most rinks are surrounded by a railing that you can hold onto while you're learning. While holding the railing, push one foot forward about six inches. Then push your other foot forward. Next, try going from one foot to the other without stopping. Once you feel ready, step away from the railing. Keeping your knees slightly bent to help with your balance, push one foot forward and then another.

Start gliding

Next, practice gliding on skates. Gliding is when you move forward on the ice without moving your feet. Push off on one foot and then the other to gain some speed. Then, keep both feet on the ice and see if you have enough momentum to glide. To stop, point your toes inward and slightly angle the blades of your skates down into the ice. Remember, if you fall down while practicing any of these moves, don't worry. Falling is extremely common. Push yourself up to standing, and try again.

4 ways to stay warm outdoors

If you're doing a winter sport or playing in the snow, protect yourself from the cold by following these steps.

Dress in layers

Start by putting on a base layer, such as leggings and a turtleneck. Then add a sweatshirt and sweatpants. Finally, put on snow pants and a winter coat. Wearing layers will help your body hold in warm air.



Add accessories

To keep cold air from getting through your layers, you'll also want to wear a hat, gloves, warm socks, and boots. Tuck leggings into socks so your legs are covered. Put your gloves on before you put on your coat to ensure that your wrists are covered and don't get cold.

Keep moving

When you're outside, moving your body will create heat, keeping you warmer. If you start to feel cold from waiting your turn to use a sled, try doing some jumping jacks or jogging in place.



Take breaks

If your fingers or toes get cold, your nose starts running, and your cheeks feel red, head indoors for a break. Take off any wet and cold clothing so your skin can get dry. You can also drink a warm beverage, such as hot chocolate!

MAKE IT SNOW IN A GLASS JAR

When snow isn't in the weather forecast, create your own version inside with this fun science experiment.

- 1. Mix ingredients.** Fill a 16-ounce glass jar about two thirds of the way full with baby oil. In a separate bowl, mix a squirt of acrylic white paint with about ¼ cup of water and pour into the jar. Notice that the water sinks and the oil stays on top.
- 2. Make a storm.** With an adult's permission, break up an antacid tablet, such as Alka Seltzer, into small pieces, and drop two or three into the jar. The white water will bubble up through the oil, creating the look of a "snowstorm" for about 45 seconds. Drop another antacid into the mixture to see it again.
- 3. Know the science.** The snowstorm happened because antacids have sodium bicarbonate and citric acid in them. When those ingredients mixed with the water, they caused bubbles of carbon dioxide to rise up through the oil. When the carbon dioxide was released into the air, the remaining water fell back down through the oil since oil and water don't mix.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK MEND YOUR CLOTHES

If you get a hole in a shirt or a pair of pants, you can try mending the clothing so you can keep wearing it. One way to do this is by sewing on a patch that covers the hole. Ask an adult if you can try it. Using fabric scissors, cut out a piece of fabric that is slightly larger than the hole. Place it over the hole, and secure it with pins. Using a needle and thread, sew stitches to secure the patch. To make a stitch, push the needle up through the clothing and the patch, then push the needle back down through the patch and clothing. Repeat until you've sewn stitches around all the edges. Knot the thread, cut the thread above the knot, and remove the pins. You may like the clothing even more now!

A patch can cover a hole.



How to...

WOW!

India produces more than 12 million tons of chickpeas a year, the most of any country in the world.



WARNING!

Ask an adult before using an oven and food processor.

Bake up falafel dippers

Ingredients

- 8 ounces dried chickpeas
- ½ yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 cup parsley, plus more for garnish
- ¼ cup mint leaves
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon coriander
- 1½ teaspoons salt, plus two pinches, divided
- Olive oil
- ¼ cup tahini
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 2 to 4 tablespoons warm water

Instructions

- 1.** Place the dried chickpeas in a bowl or jar of water, and let them soak for 12 hours or overnight.
- 2.** Preheat oven to 375° F. Drain, rinse, and dry the chickpeas. Roughly chop the onion. Place chickpeas in the bowl of a food processor along with the onion, garlic, parsley, and mint.
- 3.** Pulse until the mixture resembles a fine meal. Pour into a large bowl and mix in the cumin, coriander, and salt.
- 4.** Grease a baking sheet with olive oil. Using a tablespoon, form the falafel mixture into small mounds and place onto the baking sheet,

- taking care to avoid crumbling. Drizzle the tops of the falafel with more olive oil and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until the bottoms are golden and the balls hold together. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with a pinch of salt.
- 5.** Meanwhile, prepare the tahini sauce. Combine the tahini, lemon juice, and a pinch of salt in a bowl and mix. Add the warm water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the mixture is smooth. Top with chopped parsley.
 - 6.** Serve the falafel with the tahini sauce on the side. Makes 4 servings.



How to...

Bake delicious holiday cookies

With these fun recipes, you can make homemade treats for your family and friends.

SNOWMOJI TREATS

Ingredients

- 8 ounces cookie dough
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup white frosting
- ¼ cup chocolate frosting
- 12 orange Tic Tac mints
- Brown chocolate gems
- Fruit slice candies
- Sour candy tape

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 350° F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, knead together the cookie dough and flour.
2. Roll the dough out to ¼-inch thickness, then cut into circles using a 2½-inch round cookie cutter. Gather and reroll the dough as needed, and arrange the cookies 2 inches apart on your pans. Place the whole cookie sheets in the freezer for 10 minutes, then remove and bake until

- cookies are golden around the edges, about 8 minutes. Let cool on the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a rack.
3. Once cooled, cover the top of each cookie with white frosting. Add an emoji face as desired, using chocolate gems or frosting for eyes, chocolate frosting for a mouth, an orange Tic Tac nose, and a hat or scarf made of sour candy tape or a fruit slice trimmed into the desired shape. Makes 1 dozen cookies.



WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the oven for any of these recipes.

CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT THUMBPRINTS

Ingredients

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¾ cup bittersweet chocolate chips
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 2 to 3 tablespoons crushed candy canes

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 350° F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. In a small bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt. In a stand mixer fit with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and ¾ cup sugar on medium until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla and beat to incorporate. Reduce the mixer's speed to low and blend in the flour mixture one third at a time.
2. Place the remaining ¼ cup sugar in a separate bowl. Scoop out a tablespoon of dough and roll it into a ball, then toss it in the sugar to coat. Repeat with the remaining dough, placing the balls 2 inches apart on the prepared sheets.
3. Bake the cookies for 6 minutes. Remove from the oven and, with an adult's help, use a teaspoon to make a divot in each cookie. Bake for 6 minutes more. Let the cookies cool for 5 minutes on the baking sheets, then transfer to a rack.
4. In a bowl, combine the chocolate chips and heavy cream. Microwave on high for 45 seconds, then carefully stir the mixture. Spoon chocolate into the center of each cookie, then sprinkle each with candy cane pieces. Let the chocolate stiffen before serving. Makes about 2½ dozen cookies.

SWEET CELEBRATION
National Candy Cane Day takes place every year on December 26.



JOY HOWARD



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?
In the UK, cookies are called biscuits, which comes from the Latin *biscotus*, meaning "twice-cooked."

CHEWY GINGER MOLASSES COOKIES

Ingredients

- 2¼ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon cloves
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup butter
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅔ cup molasses
- 1½ cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- Sparkling sugar

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 350° F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, ginger, cloves, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt. In a stand mixer fit with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla. Blend in the molasses. Reduce the mixer's speed to low and blend in the flour mixture one third at a time.
2. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes. Scoop the dough into tablespoon-size portions and arrange them on the prepared baking sheets, about 2 inches apart.
3. Bake the cookies, turning them once halfway through, for about 12 minutes. Let them cool on the pans for 5 minutes, then transfer them to a rack.
4. In a small bowl, stir together the confectioners' sugar and milk. Spoon the icing on the cookies and sprinkle on sparkling sugar. Makes about 3 dozen cookies.



FUN FACT
The average American eats about 35,000 cookies in their lifetime.

DRIZZLED GRAHAM CRACKER BITES

Ingredients

- 1¼ cups bittersweet chocolate chips
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 6 graham crackers, broken into quarters
- ½ cup blue candy melts
- ½ cup white candy melts
- Gold sprinkles

Instructions

1. Cover a baking sheet with parchment paper. Melt the chocolate according to the package directions, then stir in the vegetable oil. Transfer the chocolate to a bowl.
2. Working with one cracker at a time, use a fork to submerge, then lift the cracker from the chocolate. Gently tap the fork on the side of the bowl to get rid of the excess chocolate, then slide the cracker onto the prepared sheet. Repeat with the remaining crackers.

3. Let the chocolate set until hardened.
4. Melt the blue and white candy melts in the microwave, according to the package directions. Place each color in its own piping bag fit with a small writing tip. Drizzle the melted candy onto a cracker, one color at a time, then scatter it with gold sprinkles. Repeat with the remaining crackers. Let the candy set. Makes 2 dozen bites.



JOY HOWARD



How to...



LOTS OF LIGHTS
An estimated 150 million sets of holiday lights are sold in the US every year.

Decorate for the holidays

Adding special touches to your home can help you get into the spirit of the season.

Now that it's December, you and your family may want to decorate your home for the holidays or for winter. You may have decorating traditions that you maintain each year, but it can also be fun to add extra touches that will make your home feel festive. As the days get colder, you might be spending more time indoors, which is another reason to add some decorations. Here are some ways to get started.

Take inventory

It's always a good idea to start with decorations you already have, instead of buying new ones. Even if a parent has already put up some holiday items, there might be leftover decorations you could put in your bedroom. You could also ask if there are any extra supplies from other holidays or events, such as a birthday party, that you could use.

Be creative

It's fun to come up with new ways to use decorations. For example, if you discover an extra strand of lights, you could drape them over a bed frame or the doorway to your living room. A collection of dreidels could be put in a bowl at your entryway table, or you could decorate a bookshelf with them. You could use festive wrapping paper to cover your front door or the door to your room.



Create your own snow.

Start crafting

If you have glitter, stickers, or puffy paints, ask an adult if you can use them to decorate plain tree ornaments. Add the year to the ornament so you'll always remember when you made it. Snowflakes cut out from white or blue paper are easy to make and look great as decorations. To make them, fold white paper into quarters and then cut out several shapes. Unfold the paper to reveal the snowflake. With an adult's help, hang the snowflakes from a ceiling with clear string. Or you could tape snowflakes to your windows to create a snowy setting.

Finally, you could cut out a large piece of a cardboard box, paint it, and write a festive message on it, such as "Light up the night" or "Let it snow." Display it like artwork on a shelf.

Bring toys into the decorations

If you have Lego bricks on hand, you could use them to create a tiny menorah or miniature Christmas tree to display on your bedside table. If you have a collection of animal or superhero figures, you could use construction paper to create winter hats to put on them and display them on your desk or shelves. If you have a playhouse or a toy tent set up in your room or playroom, add some decorations, like a string of lights or paper snowflakes.

4 decorating ideas from other nations

Find out how people around the world show their holiday spirit.

Boats with lights

In Greece, it's traditional at Christmas to see boats decked out with lights and ornaments as a symbol of new life and to thank sailors who devoted their life to the sea.



Vegetable carvings



At farmers markets in Oaxaca, Mexico,

radishes carved into images of holiday scenes and local wildlife are sold. People buy them to display in their homes.

Baskets of treats

Children in Norway make heart-shaped baskets from paper. Known as *julekurver* baskets, they are hung in homes or on Christmas trees in hopes they'll be filled with nuts and candy.



Glowing candles

During the Hanukkah holiday in Israel, especially on the eighth and final night, many people place menorahs in specially designed glass boxes outside their home or business.

How to...



MAKE A HOLIDAY GIFT-GIVING PLAN

If you are going to give holiday gifts, now is a good time to start planning out the presents. Here's how.

- 1. Talk to others.** If you have siblings or cousins you'd like to exchange gifts with, ask an adult if you can start a gifting tradition. You could draw names out of a hat so everyone gives and gets one gift. Or maybe your friends want to make presents for one another.
- 2. Try a special exchange.** Ask an adult to help you look online for the rules for a gift exchange, such as a Yankee Swap. In this exchange, each person brings a gift that anyone would enjoy to a gathering, and they draw numbers to start trading gifts.
- 3. Make a list.** If you're planning to give individual gifts, make a list of everyone you'll be gifting to and brainstorm ideas. Ask an adult to help you budget and plan when to buy the presents. Your gift could also be homemade, such as baked goods or a craft. A handmade card is always special to receive as well.



DID YOU KNOW?

California is known as the broccoli capital of the US because it produces about 90% of the country's broccoli.



WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Cook broccoli cheddar soup

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 3 cups chopped broccoli florets (about 1 head of broccoli)
- 1 cup shredded carrots (about 2 medium carrots)
- 2 cups half-and-half milk
- Pinch of nutmeg, optional
- 10 ounces shredded sharp cheddar cheese, plus more for garnish
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Baguette slices, toasted, for serving

Instructions

- 1.** Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until it starts to soften, about 5 minutes.
- 2.** Stir in the flour until incorporated with the butter and golden brown, about 1 minute. Slowly pour in the vegetable stock, stirring constantly, until the liquid begins to boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and add

the broccoli and carrots. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, about 12 minutes.

- 3.** Stir in the half-and-half and nutmeg and bring to a slight simmer. Add the cheese and stir until melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 4.** Serve with sliced baguette for dipping and extra cheese sprinkled on top. This recipe makes about 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

GREEN YOUR LAUNDRY ROUTINE

The average family does about 300 loads of laundry a year, which uses electricity and about 6,000 gallons of water. One way to save resources to help the environment is to do less laundry. For instance, if an article of clothing doesn't have any stains or odors on it, ask a parent if you can wear it again before washing it. This is especially true if you wore something for only a few hours before changing. Many jean manufacturers even suggest that the pants not be washed after every wear to preserve the material. When it's time to dry your laundry, you can also save on electricity by hanging some clothes on a drying rack instead of using the dryer.

Try to wash less often.





How to...



FIRST TEAM

The first professional American football team was started in 1897 in Pennsylvania.

Host a game-day party

Watching football with friends is a fun way to spend a weekend afternoon.

If you'd like to have a group of family and friends over on the weekend, consider hosting a game-day party. This is an event when people come together to watch a sport, often college or professional football, that's being played live on television. Here's what you need to know to plan a great game-day party at your home.

Choose a game

Ask a parent to help you look online for the game schedule of your favorite team. It's best to choose a weekend game so more people are available to attend. You also may want to choose an afternoon game, instead of an evening game, which can end late. Some games may be more exciting than others to watch as a group. For instance, if your team is facing off against its top rival or is in a playoff game, more people may want to gather during that game than others.



Cheer on your team.

Invite friends

Make a list of who you want to invite, then ask a parent to help you reach out to ask them. You and your family could also invite another family if your parent wants to take part in the party too. Invite everyone to arrive about half an hour before the game starts. This way, people can chat and enjoy some food before the game begins. It can also be fun to watch

the pregame when the players are announced. Let your guests know if they should wear something special, such as a team's colors or a sports jersey.

Plan the menu

As the host of the party, you can decide what kind of food to serve. You could provide a main course, such as chili or pizza, then ask guests to bring other snacks and sweets, such as chips and cookies. You could also decide to skip a main course and serve plenty of savory and sweet snacks. Have water and other drinks on hand, or ask people to bring their own reusable water bottles.

Add festive touches

Homemade decorations can make the area around your TV feel spirited. A few ideas: Use construction paper to make paper chains in the colors of the two teams playing and drape them around the room. Cut football shapes out of brown paper or cardboard and write messages on them, such as "Go Team" or "Touchdown," and hang them around the room. If you want to play a game, make a list of five to eight questions for everyone to answer when they arrive. Some questions could be, "Which team will win the coin toss?" and "What player will get the first touchdown?" The person with the most correct answers at the end of the game wins!

4 tasty snacks to serve at a party

These football-themed dishes are easy to prepare and fun for everyone to enjoy during the game.

Brownies

Take a tray of baked brownies and cut them into football shapes with a cookie cutter. Use vanilla icing to add white trim to them.



Snack mix

Combine a few salty and sweet items to create a tasty snack mix.



Then stir in chocolate candies, such as M&M's, in the colors of the team you're rooting for.

Dip and chips

Make or buy guacamole. Place it in a serving dish and use sour cream to add thin lines going across the dip that look like yard lines on the field. Serve with tortilla chips.



Meat "ball" kabobs

Buy premade meatballs at the store.



With an adult's help, cook them according to the package directions. Place them on a platter or thread them onto wooden skewers. Serve with marinara sauce for dipping.



How to



DID YOU KNOW?

To trap predators, hagfish release a chemical that turns the water around them into a sticky slime.

Make frosting slime you can eat

What you need:

- 1 16-ounce tub of white frosting
- Mixing bowls
- 2½ cups powdered sugar (also called confectioners' sugar), plus more as needed
- Food coloring
- Spoon
- Sprinkles (optional)
- Jars or sealable containers for storage

Instructions

1. Since you may want to eat this slime, be sure you start by washing and drying your hands well, as you do when you're cooking.
2. Scoop the frosting out of the tub and place it in a large mixing bowl. Add the powdered sugar into the bowl and mix well. If it is still sticky when you touch it, mix in another heaping tablespoon of powdered sugar or more until the mixture is a texture that feels smooth to the touch and you can stretch it between your hands.
3. If you'd like to tint your edible slime to be colorful, divide it up into portions for however many colors you'd like to make. Place each piece in a small bowl.

Into each bowl, squeeze two to three drops of food coloring to create a pastel color. Add more drops to create a deeper color. Mix the food coloring in well with a spoon or with your hands. (If adding food coloring makes the slime sticky again, sprinkle in more powdered sugar and mix it in.)

4. If you'd like, you can also add in some sprinkles, which will add a fun texture to your slime. Sprinkle them on top of the slime, then use your fingers to mix them throughout.
5. Store your slime in an airtight container for three to four days at room temperature. If you want to taste it, keep it in the fridge when you're not playing with it.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

SAVE PAPER WHEN YOU CAN

Since paper is created from trees, being mindful of the paper you use can help the environment. There are a few simple steps you can take. Aim to use a new sheet of paper only when you need to, like making a birthday card for a friend. If you're practicing your drawing or jotting down a grocery list for a parent, try to use scrap paper, such as the back of a school flyer, a used envelope, or other recycled paper. If you're printing a document from a computer, choose the double-sided option. This will reduce the amount of paper you use by half. If your family uses paper towels and napkins, ask if you can use reusable towels and napkins more often instead.

Keep a stash of scrap paper.





How to...



WOW!
More than 45 million Americans know how to knit or crochet.

Give knitting a try

This relaxing activity can help you flex your creative muscles.

Knitting is a craft where you use yarn and needles to create a series of stitches. When you make several rows of stitches, you can create specific patterns to form items like hats, blankets, and scarves. Many people find knitting to be creative and relaxing. Here's how to begin.

Gather supplies

You'll need a ball of yarn and a set of knitting needles. If you have a friend who knits, you may be able to borrow these to start out. If not, most craft stores sell yarn and needles. For your first project, choose a yarn that's marked as "medium weight" and needles that are between sizes 8 and 10.

Get started

All knitting projects start with a step called "casting on," which is how you attach yarn to the needle. Grab the free end of yarn from your ball and create a slip knot. Start by making a small loop of yarn at the end by crossing the loose end over the yarn that's still attached to the ball. Then pull the yarn that's attached to the ball through the hole and pull on the loop to make a knot. Put the loop of yarn through one of the needles and tighten the loop so it's snug.

Continue casting on

Now you need to add additional loops to your needle, which you will later use to build your stitches from. To do this, start with a slip knot on the needle in your right

hand. Take the strand of yarn that's attached to the ball and hold it in your left hand. Wrap that strand of yarn around your left thumb from front to back. Slip the needle in your right hand under the yarn that's on the front of your thumb. Keeping the yarn loop on your needle, slip your thumb out and pull the yarn tight so you're left with a loop attached to your needle. To view a video of casting on, go to tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Knitting. Repeat the stitch about 10 times.

Learn your first stitch

Now that you have a row of loops on your needle, the next step is to add stitches attached to each of these loops. There are hundreds of types of stitches, but a good first one is the knit stitch. If you have a friend or family member who knits, ask them if they will show you how to do it. To view a video of how to make a knit stitch, go to tinyurl.com/TWJUS-KnitStitch. Once you learn how to do the stitch, practice by knitting several rows of it until you have a small section of fabric.

Try a simple project

A good option for your first few projects is making squares for blankets (make several and piece them together) or scarves. To make them, you'll need a pattern with instructions to follow. [Yarn.com](https://www.yarn.com) and [knitpicks.com](https://www.knitpicks.com) have free patterns you can print out.



Choose a fun color of yarn.

4 organizations that provide warmth

Put your new knitting skills to use by donating something you make to help others.

Project Linus

Since 1995, this organization has donated more than 9 million handmade blankets to children in need. Chapters across the US offer volunteer opportunities. (projectlinus.org)



Snuggles Project



People can donate blankets to animal shelters through Snuggles Project. The website includes directions for making different kinds of blankets. (snugglesproject.org)

Magic Yarn Project

This group donates knit caps with special designs like pirate emblems or princess hair to children who have been diagnosed with cancer. One way people can help is by donating extra yarn. (themagicyarnproject.com)



Warm Up America



Volunteers are asked to knit 7-inch-by-9-inch rectangles as their donations. The rectangles are then pieced together to make blankets for senior centers, veterans' homes, and shelters. (warmupamerica.org)

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); PROJECT LINUS; SNUGGLES PROJECT; MAGIC YARN PROJECT; WARM UP AMERICA



How to...

PRACTICE POLITE TABLE MANNERS

With the holiday season here, now is a great time to brush up on your mealtime etiquette. Here are a few things to remember.

- 1. Wait for everyone.** When you sit down at a table, don't begin eating until everyone is sitting and any toasts or blessings have been made.
- 2. Watch your body language.** Sit straight in your chair with both feet on the floor. Avoid slouching or resting your elbows on the table. Also, avoid reaching across the table for dishes. Instead, ask someone to pass the dish to you.
- 3. Consider utensils.** If you've been asked to set the table, remember that the fork goes on the left of the plate and the knife goes on the right. If you sit down to a place setting with more than one set of forks and knives, the general rule is to use the ones on the outside first to eat the appetizer, soup, or salad, and use the ones closest to the plate for the main course.



COMFORT FOOD

About 63% of people said in a survey that a grilled cheese is the best sandwich to have with soup.

WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using the stove.

Make a quick tortellini soup

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 5 ounces baby kale (about 4 cups)
- 32-ounce carton of tomato soup
- 15-ounce can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 10-ounce package of cheese tortellini or other preferred tortellini flavor
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for topping
- Crusty Italian bread, for serving

Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the kale and toss until wilted, about 2 minutes.
2. Add the tomato soup and 1 cup water and bring the mixture to a simmer.
3. Stir in the chickpeas, then add the tortellini and cook until tender, about 6 minutes for fresh tortellini and 12 for dry. (This may be a bit longer than the package directions for cooking in boiling water.) Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Divide soup among bowls. Top with Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, and serve with crusty bread. Makes 4 to 6 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

HOST A LEFTOVER PIE PARTY

From apple to sweet potato, pies are a classic Thanksgiving dessert. But sometimes, when there's so much food, these delicious pies don't get eaten. If that's the case in your family, one way to make sure they don't go to waste is to host a leftover pie party. Ask friends or neighbors to come over after Thanksgiving and bring any leftover pies with them. With an adult's help, cut the pies into small slices and put them onto plates. Encourage everyone to try different types of pie. Not only will this gathering help eliminate food waste, but it's also a great way to spend time with people you may not have been able to visit on Thanksgiving.

Try some of each flavor.





How to...



LOTS TO READ
There are more than 5,000 weekly newspapers printed in the US.

Try writing an editorial

One way to take a stand is to share your opinion through a written article.

If you feel strongly about an issue, writing an editorial is one way to express your opinion. People write editorials to explain the reason they feel the way they do and to encourage others to think more deeply about an issue. In newspapers, editorials run in a section that is separate from the news sections to distinguish opinion from reported stories. Here's how to get started.

Choose a topic

Your topic could be your opinion about something that's happening in your school or community. Or it could be a way for you to comment on current events happening in the US or around the world. For example, you may have an opinion about proposed changes to your school's playground or you may want to share your thoughts on climate change. If you don't have an idea in mind, make a list of topics that are important to you. Read through *The Week Junior* to see if a story makes you feel passionately about a news event.

Start writing

An important part of your editorial is the title or "headline," as it's called in journalism. It should catch the attention of readers so they will want to stop and read what you have to say. Next, write your introduction paragraph. It should state what you're

writing about, why it's important, and what your opinion is. In the following paragraphs, you'll want to give examples that support your opinion, such as a news story, a study, or a report. Each example can be its own paragraph. As you write, focus on showing why it's important to care about this issue.

Share personal experiences

When writing your editorial, it's OK to share your own experience. One of the examples that support the opinion you give in your introduction paragraph could be a story from your life. By recounting a personal experience, you'll help readers understand where you're coming from, and you may inspire them to want to take a stand as well.

End on a strong note

After you have made your supporting points, finish with a paragraph that states your conclusion. This should be a call to action for your readers, such as, "We must act now." Give readers steps they can take to help support your cause or opinion. Once you're happy with your editorial, you could start by sharing it with your family or a teacher. If you have a school newspaper, find out if it accepts student editorials. You could also ask an adult if they could help you submit your editorial to a local newspaper that publishes opinion articles.



Brainstorm ideas first.

4 other activities you might enjoy

If you liked writing an editorial, here are some other ways to share your opinion and take a stand.

Be part of a debate team

At a debate competition, teams from different schools or clubs present their arguments for and against important issues they are assigned to speak about.



Participate in a mock trial



Some schools have mock trial clubs, which teach students what a real trial is like. You and your teammates get the details of a case and are assigned to argue one side or the other in a competition.

Run for office

If your school has a student government or council, you could run for office or ask to attend meetings. At the meetings, you might be able to express your opinion about issues under discussion in the school.



Practice being a lawmaker

Clubs that are called Model Congress or Model United Nations offer young people the chance to work together to solve challenges the country is facing as if they were US lawmakers or UN delegates.



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?
Shibori is a Japanese tie-dyeing technique that uses indigo dye.

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Make a traditional Japanese shibori bag

What you need

- Small 100% cotton white bag, washed and dried
- Craft sticks
- Rubber bands
- Drop cloth (optional)
- Rubber gloves
- Navy blue fabric dye, mixed with water according to the package directions

Instructions

1. Starting at the bottom of the cotton bag, fold about an inch of the bag up toward the top. Place a craft stick in the fold you just made, then flip the bag over and make the same 1-inch fold and add another craft stick. (This is called an accordion fold.) Continue folding and placing craft sticks on each side until the entire bag is folded up. When you reach the top of the bag, secure the folds and sticks by tightly wrapping a few rubber bands around the bag.

2. Take the bag and the dye outside to a grassy area, or spread out a drop cloth inside to work on so you don't stain any surfaces. Wearing rubber gloves, begin to apply dye to both sides of the bag. Apply just enough dye so you do not see any white left on the bag. Let the dye dry overnight.

3. When the dye has dried, remove the rubber bands and craft sticks.

4. The bag should look striped at this point. To get a checkered pattern, repeat the accordion fold

technique, this time going from left to right, instead of bottom to top as you did before. Secure the folds with rubber bands.

5. Again, apply the dye to the edges of the bag that are showing, but do not apply too much.

6. Allow the dye to dry overnight.

7. When the dye has dried, wash the bag on its own in a washing machine. Allow it to air-dry.

Adapted with permission from *Upcycle It! Crafts for Kids*, by Jennifer Perkins, published by Rockridge Press. Copyright © 2022 by Callisto Media, Inc. All rights reserved.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK PICKLE LEFTOVER VEGETABLES

If you have vegetables in your fridge and you're not sure you will eat them before they spoil, consider pickling them. Pickling vegetables, such as carrots, cucumbers, and green onions, makes them taste delicious and preserves them so you have more time to eat them. This keeps spoiled vegetables from ending up in landfills. Ask an adult to help you get started by boiling a half cup of white vinegar, a half cup of water, and a teaspoon of salt in a medium saucepan. Slice a vegetable into small pieces and fill a jar halfway with them. Pour the vinegar mixture into the jar, seal with a lid, and refrigerate. For the best flavor, wait 48 hours before serving.



Pickled vegetables are a crunchy snack.



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

A cartographer is a person whose job it is to create maps.



Navigate with a map

This important skill can also be a lot of fun to practice.

You may frequently see adults following directions on a map on their smartphone to navigate getting from one place to another. But before it was common for maps to be customized online, people would study individual paper maps or a collection of maps in a book to help them get to know an area or how to get there. Maps can also reveal more than directions. You can more clearly get a full picture of an area—its shape, for example, and where roads and waterways are located. Here's how to get started.

Begin with your town

If you want to get more familiar with paper maps, try first looking at one that represents your town. Since you already know the area, it may be easier for you to identify roads, large intersections, and neighborhoods. Ask an adult to help you find a map of your town online and print it out. Or check with your school or local library for town maps that can be checked out.

Examine the legend

The legend, typically located in a box in a corner of the map, contains information about what different symbols on the map represent. For example, the legend may reveal that a solid black line represents a road, while a blue line represents a river. There may also be symbols for hospitals, schools, historic buildings, and more.



Find places you've been.

Use the map

Once you're familiar with your town map, ask an adult to go on a map walk with you.

Using only the map, try to get from one place to another. You can set challenges for yourself on the walk. For instance, try using the map to get to every body of water in your town. Once you are able to use a map to get around your own town, you could try using one in other areas. Ask an adult if you could visit local parks that have maps for exploring the area.

4 fun facts about the history of maps

Maps have been used for thousands of years to help people understand and navigate the world.

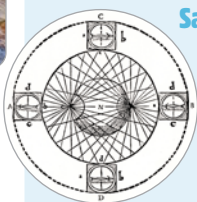
They were made of clay.

One of the oldest known maps was carved into clay around 700 to 500 BCE. It shows Mesopotamia, a historical region in Western Asia.



Sailors made them better.

Starting in the 15th century, maps became more accurate



because more sailors were traveling the seas and recording the routes they used to go from country to country to trade goods.

Some are valuable.

The first known map to mark "America" on what is now the US was created in 1507 by a German mapmaker. There is only one surviving copy, which is worth \$10 million.



They can be misleading.

Some historical maps include places that never existed. Some mapmakers drew in fake towns in order to catch people who copied their maps and tried to sell them.



How to...

TELL SOMEONE YOU'RE SORRY

Making mistakes is part of life. If you have upset a friend or family member, knowing how to offer a sincere apology can make both of you feel better. Here are some tips.

- 1. Admit fault.** The first step when apologizing is to acknowledge that what you did or said was wrong. Instead of just saying "I'm sorry," specifically state what you're apologizing for. For instance, you might say, "I'm sorry I used your special markers without asking."
- 2. Be sincere.** When saying you're sorry, it's important to let your friend or family member know that you truly regret upsetting them. You might say, "When I used your markers, I wasn't thinking. I realize I upset you, and I'm sorry."
- 3. Make an effort.** There won't always be a way to make a situation better, but sometimes there might be. For instance, you could check to make sure the caps are back on all the markers you used so they don't dry up.



Craft a desert scene with dough

What you need

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup cold water
- Skewers
- Baking tray
- Parchment paper
- Pot
- Potting soil
- Succulents
- Paint
- Paintbrush

Instructions

- To make the salt dough for the rocks, first combine the flour and salt in a bowl. Add water a few tablespoons at a time, mixing it in as you go, until it's clay-like. Knead the dough for a few minutes, then let it rest for 20 minutes. Ask an adult to heat the oven to 250° F.
- Mold the salt dough into different rock shapes. Use a skewer to pierce a hole through the center of each rock.
- Place the rocks on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Place them in the oven to dry for about 2 hours.
- While you wait for the rocks to dry, fill the pot with potting soil and plant some succulents.
- Once your rock shapes are dry and hard, carefully remove the tray from the oven. Allow the rocks to cool completely.
- Paint the rocks in a rainbow of colors. Let dry.
- Thread the rocks onto skewers and place them in the pot to complete your desert.

Reprinted with permission from *The Little Artists' Big Book of Activities* by Shannon Wong-Nizic. Page Street Publishing Co. 2022.

ANCIENT ART

The oldest known sculpture, a figure of a woman carved out of ivory, is believed to be up to 40,000 years old.



WARNING! Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK MAKE WEEKLY MEAL PLANS

Creating a meal plan is like making a schedule for what you're going to eat for breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner for the next week. Sit down with a parent and brainstorm meals you'd like to have each day, and write them down on a calendar or a piece of paper. Your family can then use the schedule of meals to make a grocery shopping list. Research has shown that meal planning can help your family eat healthier and reduce food waste. This is because having a plan to use all the food you've bought at the store makes you more likely to eat everything before it spoils. This keeps food scraps out of landfills, which is better for the environment.



Only buy what you need.



How to...



FUN FACT
Skateboarding made its debut as an Olympic sport at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Try out skateboarding

This exciting sport is fun to practice on your own or with friends.

More than 85 million people around the world participate in skateboarding. The sport is believed to have been first developed in the 1950s by surfers who wanted to do a similar sport on land. Many people have said they enjoy skateboarding because they can do it anywhere, such as on sidewalks and in parks. It's also a great way to improve your balance, which can help you with other sports. Here's how you can get started.

Find some gear

If you don't have a skateboard, you can ask a neighbor or family friend if they have one you can borrow. While skateboards are made in sizes for kids, you can learn on an adult-sized one too. It may actually be easier to learn on a slightly larger board because it can be easier to balance on. Whenever you skateboard, you should always wear protective gear—including a good-fitting helmet and elbow, wrist, and knee pads—to guard against injuries when you fall.

Start with balancing

Similar to riding a bike, one of the most important aspects of skateboarding is learning to balance on it. Place the skateboard on a patch of grass. Wearing your protective gear, step onto the skateboard, placing both feet on the board about shoulder-width apart. You can place whichever foot feels more comfortable in the front.



Skateboarding can improve balance.

You may notice you have a preference for leading with one foot or the other, once you start riding. Next, lean forward and backward on the board and notice how it reacts to your body's movements. Practice leaning and hopping on and off while the board is on the grass.

Get moving

Find a safe area, like a sidewalk or driveway, and practice moving on the skateboard. Step onto the board one foot at a time, with feet shoulder-width apart and knees bent. Take your back foot off the board, and use it to push off from the ground. As you move forward, bring the foot back onto the board. You will eventually want to push off a few times to gain speed. Once you're moving and have both feet back on the board, try turning. Push down on your toes to turn in one direction. Push back on your heels to go in the opposite direction. To stop, take your back foot off and drag it on the ground until you slow down.

Practice often

The more you skateboard, the better you'll get. Your area may have a skate park, which provides a smooth riding surface and ramps. Check to see if skateboarding clinics for beginners are held there. It can also help to watch kids with more experience. Or ask a parent to help you look up skateboarding videos on YouTube.

4 skateboarding tricks to know

Professional skateboarders have a variety of moves with specific names. Here are some of them.

Boardslide

A boardslide is when a skateboarder jumps up on a railing or ledge at a skate park, then moves across the railing before sliding down it.



Manual

Also called "pulling a munny," this trick is similar to being on a bike and popping a wheelie (lifting up the front wheel). To do it, skateboarders lean back on the board so the front wheels come up as they roll on the back wheels of the board.



Ollie

An ollie is when a skateboarder jumps in the air and the board stays with their feet.



Riding switch

Most skateboarders have one foot they prefer to have in the front of the board. However, experienced skateboarders encourage learners to "ride switch." This means to practice having the other foot in front of you so you gain the flexibility you'll need for learning harder tricks.

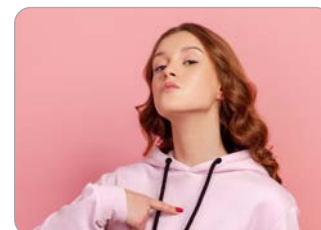


How to...

STAND UP FOR YOURSELF

Knowing how to make your thoughts and needs known can help you handle difficult situations. Here's what to know.

- 1. Remain calm and kind.** There's a difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Being assertive means to stand up for yourself, while being aggressive means saying or doing things that aren't kind. Always try not to be aggressive.
- 2. Tell them to stop.** If someone is doing something that you don't like, the first step is to tell them to stop. This could be "stop calling me those names" or "stop making fun of my food." You can then provide your reason by using an "I" statement. For example, you can say, "I don't like it when you tease me about what I eat."
- 3. Leave the situation.** If the person doesn't listen, you should leave the situation. This could mean choosing to play with other kids at the park or moving to a different lunch table. You should also tell a trusted adult what happened.



DID YOU KNOW?

Bubble wrap was invented when two scientists were trying to create a textured wallpaper in the 1950s.



Make a bright bubble wrap face

What you need

- Marker
- Cardboard or a recycled cereal box
- Scissors
- Bubble wrap
- Pen
- Tape
- Paintbrushes
- Paints in a variety of colors

Instructions

- With a marker, draw your face and hair on a piece of cardboard. Cut around the outline of your face and hair with scissors.
- Place a sheet of bubble wrap on top of the hair section. With a pen, trace the outline of the bottom part of the hair on the bubble wrap and cut along that line. Apply a small piece of tape to keep the bubble wrap in place. Then cut around the top of the hair, leaving a 1½-inch border.
- Fold the extra bubble wrap behind the cardboard so it fits tightly around it and secure with the tape.
- Using paintbrushes, decorate your bubble wrap hair with a variety of colorful paints of your choosing. Think about how it feels to paint on bubble wrap. Once you're finished, let dry on a flat surface.

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ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

REDUCE WASTE FROM TAKEOUT

Getting dinner to go or delivered is handy when your family doesn't have time to cook. But the packaging the food comes in can produce waste, so it's smart to take steps that help the environment. When ordering, request that the restaurant avoid including any plastic cutlery, napkins, or individual packets of condiments, since you can use what you have at home. When you pick up a meal from a restaurant, bring your own reusable bags so the food won't get packed in disposable ones. If food comes in a plastic container with a lid, wash and store it for future use instead of recycling it. You could use it again for packing your lunch or delivering cookies to someone.



Use your own utensils.



BOO! 2022

How to...



WOW!
The largest pumpkin on record was grown in Italy in 2021 and weighed more than 2,700 pounds.

Decorate pumpkins

These creative jack-o'-lantern ideas don't require any carving.

Carving a pumpkin is a popular way to celebrate Halloween, but you can also enjoy decorating one without carving it. You can get even more creative with your pumpkins when you use paint, paper, markers, and natural items, said Jodi Levine, a professional crafter who creates *The Week Junior's* crafts. She shares her favorite tips here.

Choose an awesome pumpkin

Classic round pumpkins are reliably fun to decorate, but Levine also recommends considering pumpkins that have unusual shapes. If you have a tall pumpkin, you could paint it white and add a face to create a spooky ghost. If you come across a "snake squash," you could paint it to look like a snake, which could be creepy to put by your front door.

Raid your craft bin

When you go through the art supplies you have at home, you may be inspired to decorate your pumpkin a certain way. If you have leftover googly eyes from another craft, you could paste a bunch onto one pumpkin. Buttons, craft paper, pom-poms, glitter—if you mix them together you could create an imaginary creature like a fairy. Old party streamers could be used to wrap a pumpkin, creating a colorful mummy. Head outside and look

for fallen leaves, acorns, and pinecones. You could glue them to your pumpkin in a pattern. "Think of a pumpkin as a blank slate that you can decorate in any way you choose," said Levine.

Consider extra supplies

To paint a pumpkin, you'll want to use acrylic paint, which can be purchased online or at a craft store. Acrylic paint will stick to a pumpkin better than other types of craft paint and hold its color, said Levine. You could also consider covering a pumpkin in black chalkboard paint and then making chalk drawings on it. Adhesive glue dots work well for gluing items such as paper, fabric, and leaves on a pumpkin.

Create a group

If you have a few pumpkins, you can paint them each a solid color. Then draw Halloween shapes, such as a moon, a witch's hat, and a cat, on construction paper. Cut them out and glue them onto each pumpkin. If you have a leftover spider web covering that you used outdoors on bushes or trees, you could wrap pumpkins in the covering and then add plastic spiders on top of each one. Or stack two or three pumpkins on top of one another to create a person, then decorate it as a goblin or witch. Glue on fake eyeballs or plastic teeth to make a spooky face.



Glue on some glitter.

4 tips for picking a perfect pumpkin

These expert ideas will help you choose and keep a pumpkin that stays fresh until Halloween.

Inspect the outside.

A fresh pumpkin should feel solid to the touch. Pumpkins that have soft or sunken spots may already be starting to decay. Try to avoid pumpkins that have cracks on the skin, too.

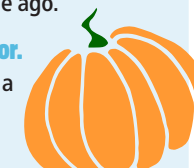


Assess the stem.

The pumpkin's stem is a good indicator of freshness. Look for a pumpkin that has a firm and bright green stem. A dry, shriveled stem could mean the pumpkin was picked a while ago.

Check for color.

If you choose a traditional orange pumpkin, look for one that's a deep shade of orange. The color should be mostly the same all over the vegetable, which shows it was picked at peak ripeness.



Carry it with care.

After selecting your pumpkin, hold your pumpkin at its base with your arms. Avoid carrying your pumpkin by its stem. If the stem breaks off, the pumpkin will soon start to decay.



How to...



Craft up some spooky lanterns

What you need

- Colored tissue paper
- Scissors
- Cup
- White glue
- Paintbrush
- Large glass jars
- Black construction paper
- White crepe paper streamers
- Battery-operated tea lights
- Adhesive dots
- Hole punch

Instructions

- To make the pumpkin and bat silhouette lanterns, start by cutting a strip of tissue paper large enough to wrap around your jar. It doesn't have to be perfect!
- In a cup, mix a big squirt of glue with about the same amount of water and stir until you have a thin glue.
- Paint the jar with the glue mixture and wrap the jar with the tissue strip. Once it is wrapped around, paint some glue mixture over the tissue paper. You can use the brush to gently nudge out any air bubbles. Allow it to dry.
- Cut shapes out of the black paper, like a jack-o'-lantern face or bats. Paint the glue mixture onto the back and

press the shapes onto the jar and let dry. Place a battery-operated tea light inside for display.

- To make a mummy lantern, cut white streamers in half the long way to get skinny streamers. Place an adhesive dot on one end of the streamer and wrap the jar, leaving a spot for eyes. When you reach the end, adhere it to the jar with another dot. You can then wrap the jar in a different direction with another streamer.
- To make eyes, punch two black dots out of the black cardstock and glue them to the jar. Display with a battery-operated tea light inside.

Create cupcake blobs

Ingredients

- 12 plain cupcakes, baked
- 1 3/4 cups white frosting
- 1 cup green candy melts
- 4 teaspoons vegetable oil
- Candy eyes
- Green pearl sprinkles
- Green nonpareils

Instructions

- Cover the top of each cupcake with frosting. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the candy melts with the vegetable oil. Microwave the mixture at half power for 1 minute. Stir it, then continue to heat it in 10-second bursts, stirring vigorously between each heating, until the candy is melted.
- Working with one cupcake at a time, spoon some of the melted candy onto the top of the cupcake, creating a blob shape. If you like, use a pointed tip of a toothpick to gently spread and smooth the surface of the melted candy.
- Scatter candy eyes, sprinkles, and nonpareils onto the candy, as shown. Repeat with the remaining cupcakes, candy, and sprinkles.



CUPCAKE HISTORY

In 1796, an American cookbook contained a recipe for "a cake to be baked in small cups."

JODI LEVINE FOR SUPERMARKET; JOY HOWARD; ON LEFT PAGE GETTY IMAGES