



Things to Do With Your Grandchildren This Holiday Season



Make time spent with your grandchildren special, memorable, and meaningful.

Bless Someone

Give a lesson on the blessing of giving.

- Shop together for a gift for a needy child.
- Cook a meal together for someone who is ill.
- Bake cookies together for a teacher or pastor.
- Shop together for their parents' gifts.
- Take them along when you volunteer.

Plan a Birthday Party for Jesus

Celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

- Let grandchildren help bake and frost a cake.
- Read the Christmas story from the Bible.
- Have a Christmas carol sing-along.
- Blow out candles and serve the cake.

Wrap and Wrap Again

Don't be surprised if your grandchildren want to make this a holiday tradition!

- Wrap a gift appropriate for any age such as cookies, a simple game, or puzzle.
- Wrap the gift in at least as many layers of different paper as there are people at the table.
- Have your family seated around the dinner table.
- Send the gift around the table, having each person in turn remove one layer of paper.
- The person who removes the last wrapping can open the gift for the family to share.

Hang a Christmas Pickle

Speculation places the origin of this tradition in Germany. However, few in modern-day Germany recognize or have even heard of the Christmas pickle.

- Hang a pickle-shaped ornament on the Christmas tree in an inconspicuous place.
- Let family members look for the pickle.
- The first person to find the Christmas pickle gets a gift for being the most observant.

Make Paper Snowflakes

Spend a pleasant afternoon being creative.

- Make snowflakes with construction paper.
- Hang on the windows or all around the house.

Construct a Gingerbread House

Assure the kids that it doesn't have to look perfect, just tasty.

- Purchase graham crackers, candy dots, and icing.
- Use the icing to paste the graham crackers onto a small, clean, empty milk or juice carton.

Cut Gelatin Shapes

- Dissolve 4 envelopes of unflavored gelatin in

1 cup cold water. Dissolve one 6-ounce package of red or green gelatin and one 3-ounce package of lemon gelatin in 4 cups boiling water. Mix the two mixtures together and pour into pan. Refrigerate until firm.

- Let children use cookie cutters to cut shapes from gelatin.
- Use spatula to help children remove shapes.
- Place shapes on paper plates.
- Children decorate shapes with whipped topping and sprinkles and then eat shapes.

Create Designer Graham Crackers

- Frost graham crackers and give to the children one at a time.
- Let your grandchildren add sprinkles and then eat their creation.

Have Fun with Cookie Cutters

- Purchase ready-made dough at the grocery store.
- Roll out.
- Let children cut shapes with cookie cutters and decorate with sprinkles.
- Bake according to package instructions.

Warm Up with Wintertime Warmers

You'll need:

- Powdered cider and cocoa mixes
- Cinnamon sticks and peppermint sticks

Here's how:

- Make the cider or cocoa.
- Let children use the cinnamon stick to stir the cider, or the peppermint stick to stir the cocoa.

Bake French Almond Cookies

Children as young as three can help shape these cookies and press the slivered almond into the center of each. This is a great cookie recipe; the cookies are indestructible.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cold lightly salted butter, cut into chunks
- 1 ¼ cups brown sugar
- 1 ¼ cups granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 2 cups ground almonds
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup slivered almonds

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cream the butter and sugars together until smooth. Stir in the honey, eggs, and ground almonds. Combine the flour and the baking soda. Stir into the butter mixture until combined.
2. Pinch off a piece of dough the size of a walnut. Roll it between your palms to form a cigar shape. Place on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Repeat, placing cookies two inches apart. Press a slivered almond into the center of each cookie. Bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes.
3. Immediately transfer cookies to a rack to cool. Cookies can be frozen in an airtight container, with wax paper between each layer, for up to six months. Defrost 30 minutes before serving. Yields about 11 dozen cookies.

Feed the Birds

You'll need:

- A jar of peanut butter and butter spreader
- A pinecone that you found on a walk

Here's how:

- Using the spreader, have your grandchildren smear peanut butter onto the pinecone.
- Roll the cone in birdseed and hang it outside near a window for good viewing.

- Be prepared to attract a few squirrels as well as birds!

Squirt Some Fun

You'll need:

- Shaving Cream
- A zipper-lock plastic sandwich bag

Here's how:

- Let your grandchildren squirt shaving cream into plastic bag. Pushing the button is half the fun.
- Add a few drops of food coloring and close it up.
- Let your little ones do the mixing to spread the color all around.

Play With Warm Play Dough

You'll need:

- 1 cup boiling hot water
- 5 teaspoons oil
- 1 cup flour
- Heaping ½ cup salt
- 2 teaspoons corn starch
- 1 package unsweetened Kool-Aid.

Here's how:

- Mix all. Allow the dough to cool.
- Place on a flat surface such as a large cookie tray or table top.
- Assemble kitchen utensils, a garlic press to make hair, straws, Popsicle sticks, forks, a potato masher, a rolling pin, cookie cutters, an egg turner, etc.
- Turn your grandchildren loose and let them enjoy molding and playing with the soft dough.

Write It Down!

Use these questions to write your autobiography. This will become a family keepsake.

- What is your earliest memory?
- What do you remember most about your mother? father? brothers and sisters?
- Where did you live as a child?
- What did you like to do best?
- How did you feel about school? What were your favorite subjects?
- What was your most embarrassing moment as a child? As an adult?
- What was the loneliest time you experienced?
- Describe popular entertainment during your teenage years. Who was your favorite movie star? What were the fashions? What was your hairstyle?
- When did you move away from home?
- What were some of your early jobs? Early loves?
- Describe the hobbies that have been the most meaningful to you.
- What have been some of the more positive changes in the world during your lifetime? Negative?
- What do you hope your children and grandchildren have learned from you?
- What have been the greatest pleasures in your life? What has caused the greatest pain?
- What qualities of your personality have been the most useful to you over the years?
- How do you hope you will be remembered?
- Who had the most influence on your life?
- What are your hopes for the future?

Take a Snooze

You and your grandchildren deserve a break after all this activity.

Book Suggestions for Children

Christian Library International

These titles are found at Family Christian Bookstores, Amazon, and Christian Book Distributors.

Birth-2 years

If Jesus Came to Visit Me, Candy Cane Press 0824966511
God of Wonders Waterbrook Press 1400070457
Jesus is With Me Chariot Victor 0781430763
Just in Case You Ever Wonder Tommy Nelson 0849975093

3-5 years

Jesus Teaches Me Kindness, Inspiration Press 0884862011
Jesus in Pictures for Little Eyes Moody 0802430597
Lift the Flap Nativity Reader's Digest 157584317
Little Songs for Little Souls Tommy Nelson 084997688X
Sharing God's Love Broadman Holman 0805426736
What Did Jesus Promise? Multnomah 1576736490

6-8 years

A Parable About the King, Broadman Holman 0805426795
If Only I Had A Green Nose Crossway Books 581343973
I'd Be Your Hero (boy) Standard Publishing 0784715130
I'd Be Your Princess(girl) Standard Publishing 0784713502
I'll Be With You Always Crossway Books 1581340001
You Are Special, Crossway Books 0891079319
Just the Way You Are, Crossway Books
If Only I Had A Green Nose, Crossway Books

9-11 (unisex)

Adventures in Oddysey Tommy Nelson 1561795372
Sticky Situations 2, Tyndale Kids 084234232X
Mars Diaries Tyndale House 0842343040

9-11 years (girls)

The Body Book: It's A God Thing Zonderkidz 0310700159
Burnt Cookies and Other Story Devotions for Girls, Standard Publishing 0784715106
The Beauty Book Zonderkidz 0310700140

12-14 years (unisex)

Left Behind: The Kids (series), Tyndale House

12-14 years (boys)

Eric Liddell Bethany House 1556611501
The Young Man in the Mirror, Broadman Holman 0805426418

12-14 years (girls)

A Girl's Guide to Life Thomas Nelson 0849944430
Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to get Back on the Board Pocket 1416507728

15-17 unisex

Every Teenager's Little Black Book series Harrison House
1577946278

15-17 years (boys)

A Young Man After God's Own Heart Harvest House 0736914781
All Things Possible :My Story of Faith, Football and the Miracle Season, Zondervan 006251718X
I Am Third Penguin Books 0142000752
I Remember Pete Maravich Cumberland House 15821484
Truth Unplugged, Honor Books 1562922181

15-17 years (girls)

Diary of A Teenage Girl series Multnomah 1576737357
Girls of Grace Make It Real Howard Books 1582294623
Teen Virtue: Real Issues, Real Life A Teen's Survival Guide Broadman Holman 0805430563
True Colors Series NavPress B000CSCJMW