

# A History of Mother's Day

The first celebrations in honor of mothers were held in the spring in ancient Greece. They paid tribute to Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. During the 17th century, England honored mothers on "Mothering Sunday," celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

In the United States, Julia Ward Howe suggested the idea of Mother's Day in 1872. Howe, who wrote the words to the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, saw Mother's Day as being dedicated to peace.

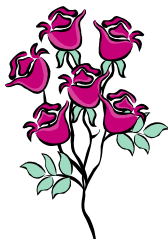
Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia is credited with bringing about the official observance of Mother's Day. Her campaign to establish such a holiday began as a remembrance of her mother, who died in 1905 and who had, in the late 19th century, tried to establish "Mother's Friendship Days" as a way to heal the scars of the Civil War.

Two years after her mother died, Jarvis held a ceremony in Grafton, W. Va., to honor her. She was so moved by the proceedings that she began a massive campaign to adopt a formal holiday honoring mothers. In 1910, West Virginia became the first state to recognize Mother's Day. A year later, nearly every state officially marked the day. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson officially proclaimed Mother's Day as a national holiday to be held on the second Sunday of May.

But Jarvis' accomplishment soon turned bitter for her. Enraged by the commercialization of the holiday, she filed a lawsuit to stop a 1923 Mother's Day festival and was even arrested for disturbing the peace at a war mothers' convention where women sold white carnations — Jarvis' symbol for mothers — to raise money. "This is not what I intended," Jarvis said. "I wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit!"

When she died in 1948, at age 84, Jarvis had become a woman of great ironies. Never a mother herself, her maternal fortune dissipated by her efforts to stop the commercialization of the holiday she had founded, Jarvis told a reporter shortly before her death that she was sorry she had ever started Mother's Day. She spoke these words in a nursing home where every Mother's Day her room had been filled with cards from all over the world.

Today, because and despite Jarvis' efforts, many celebrations of Mother's Days are held throughout the world. Although they do not all fall at the same time, such countries as Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia and Belgium also celebrate Mother's Day on the same day as the United States.



Courtesy Of: By HOLLY HILDEBRAND  
Houston Chronicle Interactive



# The Patchwork Quilt

Often a quilting was the occasion for a young lady to announce her engagement, and her hope-chest quilts would be quilted. A girl usually did not quilt her quilt tops until she was reasonably certain of marriage, for it meant a real outlay of money to provide the cloth for the linings and the filling for the interlinings of her dozen or so quilts.

In writing of such an affair, Thomas Hamilton Ormsbee tells of the significance of the heart design used in connection with the quilts of a prospective bride, and many stories have come down to us relative to that very special quilt called the Bride's Quilt. The stories are much the same in essence. Most agree that it was supposed to be made by the bride-to-be, whether it was made during the years before she became engaged with the hope of marriage in mind, or made nearer the wedding date—the very last of her hope-chest quilt tops to be finished.



Perhaps no form of folk art ever developed into a greater “hearts and flowers” affair than the patchwork quilt in America. From its practical and prosaic beginnings, it became interwoven with romance until it fairly dripped with sentiment.

The quilting bees were one of the few social diversions outside the church, ranking high in popularity with the church socials and the box suppers. Here the background for romance was provided, the bee serving as a kind of matrimonial bureau for all ages.

Little girls were brought up on stories of hope-chest quilts and Bride's Quilts and, just as they did their daily “stents” on their samplers (for “idle hands were the devil's work tools”), they learned early to work on their quilt squares. No doubt the samplers with their pious mottoes and carefully worked alphabets were more edifying, but the making of a quilt square could be more exciting. It just *might* develop into a Bride's Quilt! There are records of little girls starting their Bride's Quilts at the tender age of eight and nine years.

That Bride's Quilt! In this machine-made articles, it's the thought, time, and effort choice of the pattern alone carried variations of the over-hearts or hearts in a Other sentimental designs Wedding Rings, Love and Crescent Moon, signi-ward to a long life together, a variation of Oak Leaves,



day of mass production and quite staggering to consider that went into its making. The was of great moment. Many heart motif, such as hands-four-leaf clover arrangement. included Lovers' Knots, Linked Rose, Cupid's Arrowpoints, fying virginity. Looking for-the couple might decide upon a pattern foretelling longevity.

Often the young man involved would help his young lady work out the design for the quilt and also the



pattern for the quilting. We can imagine their choosing some favorite flower as they courted in the old-fashioned garden.

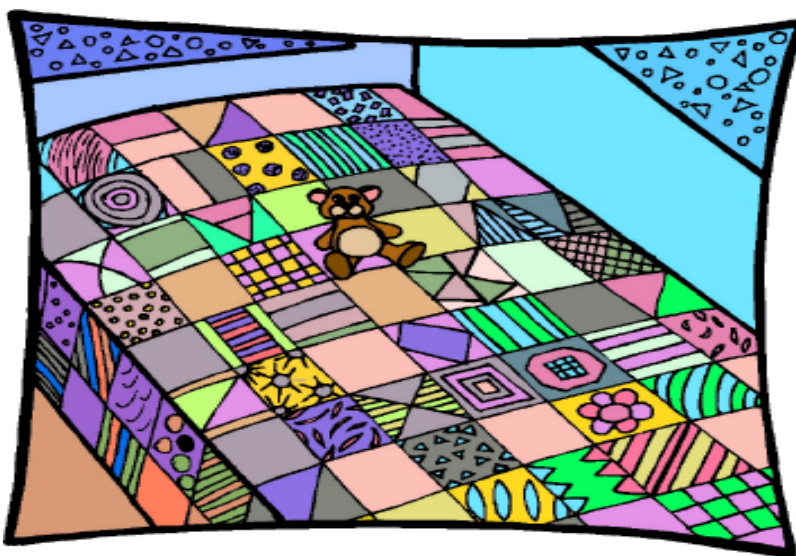
The main difference in the stories pertaining to the Bride's Quilt seems to be in the number of quilts required to make up a proper dowry. Some say that there should be twelve in the dowry and that the thirteenth, the bride's very own, brought the number up to the thirteen of a "baker's dozen." Others claim that the number of dowry quilts need be only twelve, starting with the goodly number of ten which could be made by the bride, her mother, or her friends. To these, the bride-to-be added hers, of course made by her own hands. Then, at the time of marriage, a twelfth quilt, a Freedom Quilt, was added by the bridegroom, thus completing the good round dozen.

A Freedom Quilt rivaled the Bride's Quilt in significance, and there is much fascinating lore connected with it. Much was made of a young man's coming of age. Custom decreed that he be given a new suit of clothes called a Freedom Suit, and in like manner it was considered appropriate that he be given a Freedom Quilt, which could be made by his mother, sister, or friends. If marriage was not imminent, his quilt was carefully laid away until the time when he decided to marry.

Courtesy of: Ideals Magazine  
11315 Watertown Plant Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53226

As an integrated lesson, students may want to research and report on some of the following items:

1. Quilting in America
2. Quilting Bees
3. Bride's Quilt
4. Freedom Quilt
5. Dowry
6. Life style of America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century



# October Calendar of Events

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Study the calendar of special events in October. Plan some fun activities with your classmates. You may use some of the suggested activities listed in the calendar.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sabbath
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Thurgood Marshall sworn in as 1st black Supreme Court Judge	<b>3</b> The first Thanksgiving celebrated in 1863. Plan a feast day.	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 1st World Series broadcast on radio.	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> The Great Fire of Chicago 1871. Plan a fire drill for your family.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Leif Ericson landed in America 1000. Draw a Norwegian flag.	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Eleanor Roosevelt born, 1884	<b>12</b> Christopher Columbus discovers America, 1492. Bring a corn or potato dish to share with your class.	<b>13</b> The White House building project begins, 1792.
<b>14</b> Speed of sound broken in 1947.	<b>15</b> World Poetry Day. Write a poem to celebrate.	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Albert Einstein arrives in the USA from Germany, 1933	<b>18</b> Alaska was transferred from Russia to the USA in 1867.	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Thomas Edison invents the incandescent lamp, 1879	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> United Nations Day - How many ethnic groups are in your class?	<b>25</b> 1st postcard mailed in the USA, 1870	<b>26</b> The Erie Canal opened in 1825	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> The Statue of Liberty is dedicated, 1886	<b>29</b> The Stock Market Crashed, 1929. Send an apple decorated card to a friend.	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			



# October 12<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



This day changed life on the American continent forever. Why? You may ask. On October 12, 1492, an explorer named Christopher Columbus discovered The Americas. In fact, he landed in the Bahamas just off the coast of Cuba.

Native Americans mourn the day because their lives worsened after the European invasion. They lost the privilege to live a nomadic life. Some tribes became extinct. Others barely survived. Today, many tribes are cherishing their heritage by recreating worship and ceremonial rites on their reservations.

Finding a new continent offered a chance for many Europeans to live a better life than the ones they had. Columbus was commissioned to purchase spices and gold for The King and Queen of Spain. He thought he had reached the Indies, his intended destination. So, that is why the people he saw were called Indians.

The New World was fascinating to the crew of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. They were introduced to new foods such as peanuts, corn, cocoa beans, potatoes, and tobacco.

**Directions:** Answer the following questions and complete the assignments below. You may want to use a separate piece of paper for your work.

1. What were the names of the ships in which Columbus and his crew sailed to the New World?
2. Use the encyclopedia to create a graphic time line showing the events of Columbus' voyage to the New World.
3. Draw and then label a map showing the route that Columbus took from Spain to the New World.
4. You are asked to compile a list of the supplies that you would need to take on a sea expedition to find new land. Prioritize the items on the list.



5. Imagine the sailors' sight of land after weeks at sea. Write a diary comprising seven days. Include the days just before dropping anchor in the harbor and when they landed on the island.
6. What do you think? Were the food items such as cocoa beans, potatoes, corn, and tobacco more or less important than the gold and spices the King and Queen of Spain wanted Columbus to bring back?
7. Potatoes are an important part of the western cuisine today. They contain needed nutrients such as vitamin C, potassium and iron. Place the following methods of preparing the potato in ABC order below.

Scalloped	French fries	Soup	Whipped
Baked	Salad	Dumplings	Hash
Skins	Chips	Pancakes	Mashed
Boiled	Jacket		



1.	8.
2.	9.
3.	10.
4.	11.
5.	12.
6.	13.
7.	14.





# October Words

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Match the words from the Word Bank to the Synonym List. Then write the words in the Matching Word Column.

Word Bank	Synonym List	Matching Word
Investigate	Jump, hurdle, bound	
Cross	Explode, erupt, broken	
Ship	Domestic, aboriginal	
Explore	Start, open, enter	
Sailors	Holy, blessed, divine	
Sacred	Boat	
Native	Crew	
Arise	Look, seek, search	
Burst	Fresh, verdant, new	
Green	Angry, annoyed, mean	
Flower	Beam, grin	
Grow	Research, hunt	
Smile	Cultivate, produce	
Wonder	Bloom, blossom	
Leap	Awe, question, curiosity	



# October Words

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ KEY \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Match the words from the Word Bank to the Synonym List. Then write the words in the Matching Word Column.

Word Bank	Synonym List	Matching Word
Investigate	Jump, hurdle, bound	<i>Leap</i>
Cross	Explode, erupt, broken	<i>Burst</i>
Ship	Domestic, aboriginal	<i>Native</i>
Explore	Start, open, enter	<i>Arise</i>
Sailors	Holy, blessed, divine	<i>Sacred</i>
Sacred	Boat	<i>Ship</i>
Native	Crew	<i>Sailors</i>
Arise	Look, seek, search	<i>Investigate</i>
Burst	Fresh, verdant, new	<i>Green</i>
Green	Angry, annoyed, mean	<i>Cross</i>
Flower	Beam, grin	<i>Smile</i>
Grow	Research, hunt	<i>Explore</i>
Smile	Cultivate, produce	<i>Grow</i>
Wonder	Bloom, blossom	<i>Flower</i>
Leap	Awe, question, curiosity	<i>Wonder</i>





# October 12<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ KEY \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



This day changed life on the American continent forever. Why? You may ask. On October 12, 1492, an explorer named Christopher Columbus discovered The Americas. In fact, he landed in the Bahamas just off the coast of Cuba.

Native Americans mourn the day because their lives worsened after the European invasion. They lost the privilege to live a nomadic life. Some tribes became extinct. Others barely survived. Today, many tribes are cherishing their heritage by recreating worship and ceremonial rites on their reservations.

Finding a new continent offered a chance for many Europeans to live a better life than the ones they had. Columbus was commissioned to purchase spices and gold for The King and Queen of Spain. He thought he had reached the Indies, his intended destination. So, that is why the people he saw were called Indians.

The New World was fascinating to the crew of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. They were introduced to new foods such as peanuts, corn, cocoa beans, potatoes, and tobacco.

**Directions:** Answer the following questions and complete the assignments below. You may want to use a separate piece of paper for your work.

1. What were the names of the ships in which Columbus and his crew sailed to the New World?
2. Use the encyclopedia to create a graphic time line showing the events of Columbus' voyage to the New World.
3. Draw and then label a map showing the route that Columbus took from Spain to the New World.
4. You are asked to compile a list of the supplies that you would need to take on a sea expedition to find new land. Prioritize the items on the list.



5. Imagine the sailors' sight of land after weeks at sea. Write a diary comprising seven days. Include the days just before dropping anchor in the harbor and when they landed on the island.
6. What do you think? Were the food items such as cocoa beans, potatoes, corn, and tobacco more or less important than the gold and spices the King and Queen of Spain wanted Columbus to bring back?
7. Potatoes are an important part of the western cuisine today. They contain needed nutrients such as vitamin C, potassium and iron. Place the following methods of preparing the potato in ABC order below.

Scalloped	French fries	Soup	Whipped
Baked	Salad	Dumplings	Hash
Skins	Chips	Pancakes	Mashed
Boiled	Jacket		



1. <b><i>baked</i></b>	8. <b><i>mashed</i></b>
2. <b><i>boiled</i></b>	9. <b><i>pancakes</i></b>
3. <b><i>chips</i></b>	10. <b><i>salad</i></b>
4. <b><i>dumplings</i></b>	11. <b><i>scalloped</i></b>
5. <b><i>french fries</i></b>	12. <b><i>skins</i></b>
6. <b><i>hash</i></b>	13. <b><i>soup</i></b>
7. <b><i>jacket</i></b>	14. <b><i>whipped</i></b>



# The "Real" Story of Thanksgiving



*Thanksgiving Day is a special day to many Americans. It is a day of giving thanks for all the blessings our nation has received. This tradition dates back 380+ years when the Pilgrims were trying to get their colony started in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Here is their story:*

The Pilgrims lived in England. More than anything else, they wanted freedom of religion. They wanted to worship God in their own way. The Church of England did not approve of the Pilgrims and persecuted them. The Pilgrims decided they were tired of the persecution and moved to the Netherlands in 1609. This was a great idea for awhile. But after eleven years, they saw their children speaking Dutch and learning the Dutch ways. They longed to be back in England. They decided it was time to go to America and start over.

With the backing of a London company, the Pilgrims sailed for the New World. On November 11, 1620, they finally dropped anchor at Provincetown, Massachusetts. After explorers checked out the area, they decided it wasn't what they wanted, and they sailed on to Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Plymouth was deserted. The remains of an old Indian village were there, but no sign of any in-

habitants. Smallpox had killed all the Native Americans a few years before, so the Pilgrims felt free to move in and start their new lives.

That first winter was hard. Almost half of the 102 people died. By springtime, the Pilgrims didn't know if they could survive another year.

And then a wonderful thing happened. Two English-speaking Indians came to visit. Samoset was the first. He came to visit. He came by to say hello and said a friend of his spoke good English. A week later, Samoset brought Squanto to the Pilgrim's village. The Pilgrims learned Squanto had been kidnapped 15 years earlier and was taken to England where he learned English.

A short time later, Samoset and Squanto announced the best news of all: Chief Massasoit was coming to visit. Massasoit was determined to make friends with the Pilgrims. He didn't want any fighting to break out, as had happened in other places. Massasoit worked hard. He told his people to teach the Pilgrims how to plant, fish, and cook so they could survive. Thanks to this great man, peace lasted among the Pilgrims and the Indians for more than 50 years.

After a summer of good crops, the Pilgrims felt happy with their new home. Their leader, Governor William Bradford, suggested they hold a feast of thanksgiving. The people



liked the idea, and early in October they made preparations. They caught wild turkeys, waterfowl, fish, and sea food. They gathered fruits, berries and squash. They collected nuts, herbs, and seasonings. When all was ready, they invited Chief Massasoit to join them. He brought 90 of his men and five freshly-caught deer.

For three days the people talked, ate, drank and made merry. It was a good ending to the summer and a good beginning for the coming winter.

The Pilgrims never held another day of thanksgiving. However, many Americans copied their example. During the Revolutionary War our forefathers held a day of thanksgiving on eight different occasions. George Washington ordered a national day of thanksgiving on November 26, 1789. During the Civil War in 1863, Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving Day an official national holiday. He set aside the last Thursday of November "as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father." Today we observe Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November.



# Happy Thanksgiving





## THANKSGIVING QUILT

Materials Needed per Student:

9 inch square of construction paper

3 inch squares of fabric, wallpaper

glue

scissors

markers/crayons

Divide the construction block into nine sections.

Glue 3 inch squares of fabric or wallpaper onto four of the squares as shown in the diagram.

Write "I am thankful for . . ." in the center square.

Think of four other things to be thankful for and write them in each of the remaining four squares.

Tape the block together with other student blocks to create a group quilt.

God		My Teacher
	I am thankful for . . .	
Friends		Family

## THANKSGIVING CENTERPIECE

Materials Needed:

posterboard circle

toilet paper tube

glitter

glue

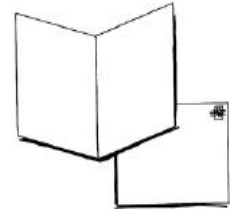
pinecones

acorns

dried leaves/flowers



- ✍ Give each child a 6 to 8 inch circle cut from poster board and a cardboard toilet paper tube.
- ✍ Cover the tube in glue and roll in glitter.
- ✍ Glue the glittery tubes upright in the centers of the poster board circle.
- ✍ Glue pine cones, acorn cups, and other assorted nature items around the base of the centerpiece.
- ✍ Sprinkle glitter all over the nature items, if desired.
- ✍ Place dried weeds or flowers in the tube vase.

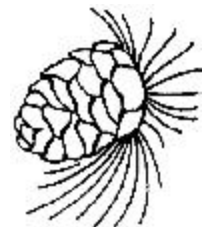


## HAND TURKEY THANKSGIVING CARD

- ✍ Trace student's hand.
- ✍ Color the hand brown for the body.
- ✍ Color the feathers (fingers).
- ✍ Write in card: This isn't just a Turkey As anyone can see, I made it with my hand Which is part of me. It comes with lots of love Especially to say, I hope that you have a very HAPPY THANKSGIVING DAY!

## PINE CONE TURKEY

- ✍ Take one red Chenille bump & shape into an "S".
- ✍ Glue this to the rounded end of a pine cone with the bump protruding somewhat above the cone for the head of the turkey.
- ✍ Take one orange bump & shape into a "V".
- ✍ Glue this under the bottom of the round part of the cone for the legs & feet.
- ✍ Take 5-7 other bumps & carefully bend them so the narrow ends can be twisted together leaving the puffy end somewhat rounded.
- ✍ Glue as many of these as nicely fits close to the flattened stemmed end of the pine cone remembering to use glue on the twisted end of the wire.

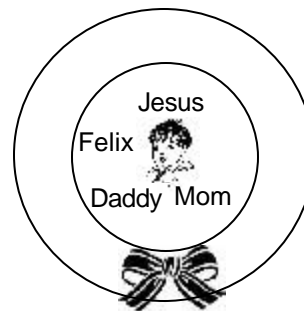




## THANKFUL WREATH

### Materials Needed:

paper plate  
orange and yellow paper  
glue  
tissue paper - fall colors  
picture of student  
bows  
markers  
string



- ✂ Cut out an orange or yellow circle to fit in the center of the paper plate.
- ✂ Glue circle to the center of plate.
- ✂ Crumple up and glue colored tissue paper to the outside of the wreath.
- ✂ Glue picture in the center of the plate.
- ✂ Write items you are thankful for all around the picture.
- ✂ Glue the bow at the bottom of the wreath.
- ✂ Attach a ribbon or string on the back to hang the wreath.

## M&M TURKEYS

### For each turkey you will need:

2 pieces of orange nylon net, about 10" square each  
needle and thread  
1/2 of a brown pipe cleaner  
1 section of red chenille bump  
2 tiny wiggle eyes  
a piece of strong thread or thin string  
about 1/2 to 1 cup plain M&Ms  
glue



- ✂ Put the 2 pieces of net together, with the corners of one along the sides of the other, making 8 points.
- ✂ Pour M&Ms in center
- ✂ Gather up the points with needle and thread, twist and tie securely.
- ✂ Coil the brown pipe cleaner, leaving about 2"; curve the 2" to form the neck.
- ✂ Tuck the red bump into the bottom of the coil to form the wattle.
- ✂ Glue a tiny eye on each side of the head.
- ✂ Shape the body - the M&Ms - so that the ends of the net become the tail and stick out the back.
- ✂ Insert the neck thru the net in the front.



## Thanksgiving Internet Sites

### Happy Thanksgiving From Billy Bear Storybooks

Are you ready to play some Thanksgiving games? Start here for your invites and then check in for fun things to do for that day! <http://www.billybear4kids.com/holidays/thanksgiving/thanksgiving.htm>

**HomeArts:** For many Americans, it's the single most important dinner of the year. Thanksgiving is a time for family reunions, all-day football, and food, food, food! HomeArts has put together a package of holiday hints and recipes galore to help you make this holiday your most special ever. So enjoy, and Happy Thanksgiving from all the folks at HomeArts!

<http://food.homearts.com/food/homepage/special/00than17.htm>

**VegWeb's Thanksgiving Day Recipes:** Lots! <http://www.vegweb.com/misc/thanksgiving.shtml>

**Better & Gardens Online - Thanksgiving Survival Guide:** Dozens of useful articles on ingredients, techniques, and holiday traditions. <http://www.bhg.com/food/holiday/>

**City of Plymouth, MA Homepage.** True story of Thanksgiving. Activities, links.  
<http://media3.com/plymouth/>

**Visit Mother Goose's Place On The Web:** Holiday Rhymes & Recipes.  
<http://www.gbalc.org/MotherGooseSociety/index.html>

**Who Gets The Wishbone?** If you believe your wish will come true when you win the break in a wishbone contest, then you're following in the footsteps of civilizations dating back to the Etruscans, 322 B.C. And — it started with a hen, not a turkey. [http://www.butterball.com/pages/bb\\_journal.cfm?BID=3&JID=19&PRID=&AID=713&mode=article\\_display](http://www.butterball.com/pages/bb_journal.cfm?BID=3&JID=19&PRID=&AID=713&mode=article_display)



# Decorate a Christmas Tree for the Birds

## Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to teach students that birds need shelter, food, and water, and to attract birds by providing what they need.

## Materials

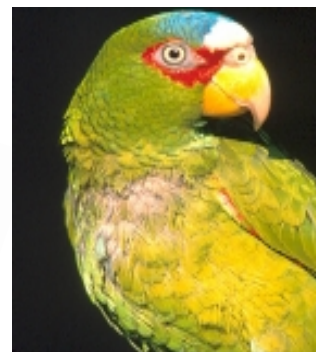
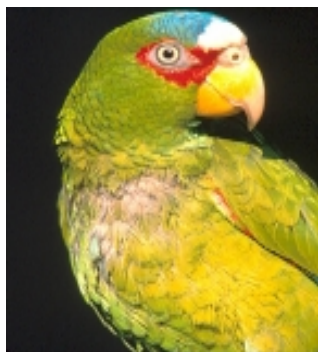
- A tree
- String
- Large needles
- Cranberries
- Popped popcorn
- Pine cones
- Peanut butter
- Bird seeds
- Small donuts
- Apples, carrots, Indian corn
- A container of water



## Procedure

1. Choose a tree that you can see from your classroom window and decorate it. A discarded Christmas tree can be placed in a bucket of sand.
2. Have students string cranberries and popped popcorn on long pieces of string.
3. Tie a string to the top of each pinecone. Spread pinecones with peanut butter, and roll them in birdseed.
4. Collect small donuts, apples, carrots, and Indian corn that can be hung on a tree. Have students attach string to each one.
5. Get additional ideas from students.
6. Decorate the tree by draping the strings of popcorn and cranberries over the branches.
7. Hang the other decorations on the other branches.
8. Place a container of water on the ground near the tree.
9. Watch as the birds enjoy the food, shelter, and water that was provided.

Adapted from Science by the Season, Carson Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.



# DAYS WHEN THE SNOW PACKED RIGHT

*By Donald S. Henning*



When winter's winds blew bitter cold,  
I used to stay within the fold  
And wait for days with warming sun  
To venture out and join the fun—  
The days when the snow packed right.

'Cause zero days were good for naught;  
I could not count the colds I caught.  
How useless was the sugar snow,  
And so I wished, at ten below,  
For days when the snow packed right.

But when it rose to right at freezing,  
Then the snow was ripe for squeezing,  
And when you shaped it, there it stayed!  
I still can hear the scrunch it made  
On days when the snow packed right.



When snowballs flew and filled the skies,  
And all around the forts would rise,  
The yells and challenges went forth—  
The happy sounds of life up north  
And days when the snow packed right—



The giggling silence for a while  
As whispering warriors made a pile  
Of snowballs for a sneak attack  
To take the enemy aback  
On days when the snow packed right.

And when you had about a hundred,  
You would find your judgment blundered  
'Cause all the while you made your store,  
The other fort made even more,  
Those days when the snow packed right.

Then shouts of "Charge!" and shots of snow  
Fast went flying to and fro,  
And he who stood and turned his back  
Received a cold, wet, squishy smack  
On days when the snow packed right.



Quite suddenly the laughter dies;  
I'm older now and realize  
On snowy days and frigid nights  
How happy were the snowball fights  
And days when the snow packed right.



# HEROES OF THE FAR NORTH

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Revelation 2:10.

Many stories of heroism and devotion to duty are recorded in the annals of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. These brave men have faced dangers, hardships, death itself, in the performance of their duties. One of these stories will be told of interest and will show you the spirit of these brave men.



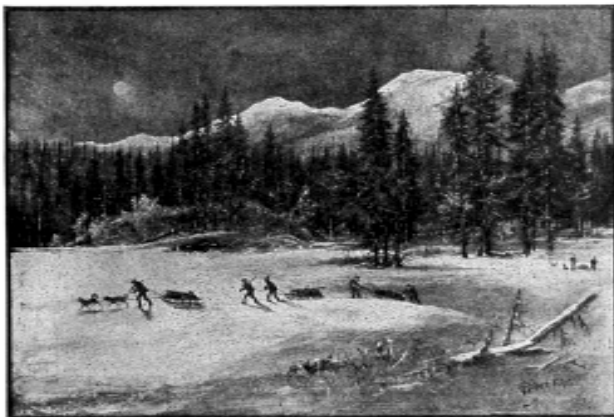
In the year 1910 the Mounted Police had two headquarters, or posts, in the Far North, or Arctic region, one of them at Herschel Island, and the other at Fort MacPherson on the Peel River. Fort MacPherson was their northern headquarters, and was five hundred miles from Dawson City in the Yukon. These five hundred miles separating the two points were of the most forbidding nature, the worst in the world, we are told. Between these two posts lay the great Rocky Mountain range, turbulent rivers, unmapped forests, and great lakes.

By order of the Department, mail must be carried once a year between Dawson, the Yukon metropolis, and Fort MacPherson, over these five hundred miles of wild, rugged, uninhabited country.

It was in December, 1910, that a company of four men with their dog teams set out from Fort MacPherson, carrying the mail and a small stock of provisions. In the party were Inspector Fitzgerald, Constables Kinney and Taylor, and ex-Constable Carter, who was retiring on a pension.

As might be expected, it was bitterly cold. The cruel north wind whistled and shrieked as it swept down from the icebound Arctic, and the thermometer dropped to 65 degrees below zero. It was not promising weather for such a trip.

Falling in by chance with a company of Indians who were headed for Dawson, they made good time and managed to hire one of the Indians as a guide to lead them to a pass in the mountains. Having traveled much in the North, when they reached the Wind River Valley, they felt quite sure of their position, therefore paid off the guide on New Year's Day and started on alone to find the way.



Had they kept to schedule, they would have reached Dawson late in January; but the month passed, and there was no word from the men. About the twentieth of February some Indians told Superintendent Snyder that they had passed the party of Mounted Police in the Wind River section and that they should have reached Dawson





long before.

The news was flashed to Regina to the Mounted Police headquarters there, and the word came back as follows: "Nothing is to stand in the way of your acting immediately to get in touch with the party." A man named Dempster, the best snowshoe runner in the whole Yukon Territory, was secured, and he reported at once with his famous Husky dog team to head the rescue party. He was bidden to find the men at any cost. At a crack of the whip the Huskies bounded into their harness and were away on their long, hard run of rescue.



The weather had not moderated in the least. It was bitter cold, and the dead of winter, in the cruelest region in North America. Much of the way lay along the bed of streams, and the intense cold had cracked the ice, making traveling difficult and dangerous. Every moment was tense with risk and excitement.

There was no time to lose, for the lives of these brave men were at stake; hence the rescue party urged their dogs on. They stopped now and then for a few hours to eat, feed the faithful dogs, and get a little sleep; then the cry was heard, "Mush on!" and the party was off again. Two hundred fifty miles, half of the distance, had been covered, and not one sign or trace of the missing men had been seen. They were encouraged in the Wind River section by finding the first faint sleigh track, but it indicated that the sleigh had been headed toward Fort MacPherson instead of toward Dawson.



Dempster thought it all out, for he knew the ways of the North, and came to the conclusion that the Fitzgerald party had become lost and had started to return home to Fort

MacPherson. Since Fitzgerald was an experienced northern traveler, the rescue party now felt quite confident that he would make the return trip safely, and that he must be, at that very time, safe at home.

They came to a campsite on the sixteenth of March, and there they found the skeleton of a dog, which had evidently been killed and eaten. This told the searchers that the police party must have run short of provisions and were suffering for food. Dempster now quickened his already hurried pace. He found that the camping places were getting closer together, indicating that the men were growing weaker and could travel only a few miles each day.

March 20 brought the rescue party to an abandoned cabin of some trapper or prospector, within sixty miles of Fort MacPherson. Here the police had left a sack of mail, something they never would have done had not their condition been serious. Their tracks were plainly seen now, and Dempster and his party urged their dogs on, each hour expecting to come upon the party.

Ten miles from the deserted cabin, in the lonely forest, Dempster found a camp, and there, lying side





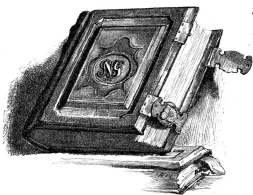
by side, wrapped in their blankets, were Kinney and Taylor, both dead. There were evidences that they had suffered much. Their feet had been frozen before they died, and it seemed that Taylor had cut off one of his toes.

Covering these bodies with brush, the rescue party hastened on, hoping to find the other men alive. They might still be pushing on toward the fort. They came upon a broken snowshoe in the trail, and a little farther along, a blue handkerchief tied to the branch of a tree. Close by they found the bodies of Fitzgerald and Carter. Carter was evidently the first to perish, and Fitzgerald had tenderly folded the dead man's hands over his breast, covered his face with a handkerchief, and then he himself died.



Dempster and his party covered the two bodies as best they could to protect them from marauding animals and hastened on to Fort MacPherson, arriving there the same evening, March 22. A party was quickly organized and sent out to bring in the bodies of the four men. When they were brought back to the fort, rough lumber was sawed from the surrounding timber, and coffins made. These four heroes of the Northland were then tenderly laid to rest in one large grave, the funeral sermon being preached by a minister, and a firing party of their comrades taking part in the last sad rites.

Fitzgerald had kept a diary faithfully up until a few hours before his death, and it gives us a glimpse of the hardships and dreadful sufferings through which they passed. After they had discharged their Indian guide, they lost their way in the Rockies and were unable to find the trail again. In crossing the rivers, they broke through the ice again and again, and, in order to keep from freezing to death, they had to stop often to light a fire and dry their wet clothing.



The intense cold had driven all the wild animals to shelter, and they could shoot no game for food. Their food supply gave out, and they had to retrace their steps. Weak and almost starving, they struggled and staggered toward Fort MacPherson. At the last camp, Kinney and Taylor could go no further, and it is supposed that the other two men made them as comfortable as possible, and then hurried on, hoping to cover the remaining sixty miles and get help. They misjudged their own strength. They were too weak to finish the trip and fell by the wayside, victims of the trail.

Fitzgerald thought of his mother during those last hours and scribbled on a small piece of paper his will, leaving all his worldly possessions to her. Enduring hardships and facing death itself, this brave man thought of his mother and planned for her future comfort. His last thoughts were of others.

This devotion to duty on the part of these courageous men of the Mounted Police Force touched the hearts of the people of Dawson, and they erected a monument in memory of Fitzgerald and his brave men. They, and others of these heroic guardians of law and justice in Canada, have performed many deeds of daring and heroism. Many, many stories such as this might be told. They "get their man"; they are faithful even unto death.

Courtesy of: God's Minutes  
Southern Publishing Association  
Nashville, TN

