

# Gratitude Box

By Julie Filby



Decorate a box for your Thanksgiving table (or any day, really) and fill it with messages of gratitude to be read aloud as you gather for your holiday meal.

**For**  
Young Family

**Season**  
Fall

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## Needed

Shoebox (or box of similar size); colored pencils, crayons, or markers; slips of paper, about 3" x 5".  
Optional: colored paper or wrapping paper; scissors; tape or glue; stickers, glitter, or natural embellishments such as pine cones or seeds

## Activity Plan

1. On Thanksgiving Day or several days before, decorate a shoebox as simply or as elaborately as you like. (If your box has a lid, wrap it separately so it is easy to put on and take off.) Print "Gratitude Box" on the side of the box.
2. Place the box in a high traffic area of your home, such as on the kitchen counter or the coffee table in the family room. Put a stack of 3" x 5" slips of paper next to it, along with colored pencils, crayons, or markers. Ask each family member to take a moment before Thanksgiving dinner and write down things they are thankful for, one thing per slip of paper. (For example: school, apples, Grandma, my job, warm house, books, Jesus.) Pair older children or adults with young children to write down the things they dictate. Children may want to illustrate their slips.
3. Have family members place their completed slips of paper in the Gratitude Box.
4. When you sit down for your Thanksgiving meal, bring the box to the table. Have family members take turns pulling out a blessing slip and reading it aloud. Continue until all the slips have been read. Point out that each of these blessings is a gift from God.
5. While counting these blessings, you will no doubt be reminded of many more, making the list even longer as you praise and thank God for the biggest gifts (each other) and the smallest (such as a favorite toy).
6. After this "reading of the blessings," pray aloud:

*O God, we praise you, we bless you, we thank you for this day and the opportunity to be gathered together. Thank you for each blessing in our Gratitude Box and for your overflowing generosity. Please bless our loved ones who are not with us today and care for everyone who is sick or feeling lonely. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*