



A FREE PRINTABLE FOR THE HOLIDAY TABLE

The Heritage Table

Questions and games that turn one holiday meal into the stories your family will still be telling in 30 years.

House rule: anyone can pass, swap a card, or keep an answer private. No explanation needed.

1 Story Cards 27 CARDS

Shuffle the deck and pass it around, or tuck one card under each plate before dinner. When it is your turn, read your card out loud and answer it, or hand it to the person it fits best.

● **Everyone** easy, good for kids ●● **Story** ask someone who remembers further back ●●● **Deep** save for dessert

2 Who Said It? A GRATITUDE GUESSING GAME

“Go around and say what you are thankful for” usually gets the same answer from everyone. This version gets better answers.

1. Everyone takes a card and answers it in private. No names.
2. Be specific. “Family and health” is true, but it is impossible to guess. “The night the power went out and we played cards by flashlight” is not.
3. Fold the cards and drop them in a bowl. One person reads each card aloud.
4. Everyone guesses who wrote it. Then the writer gets 30 seconds to tell the story behind it. That story is the point of the game.

Little kids can draw their answer or tell it to a grown-up who writes it down. Want to keep score? One point for each correct guess, and one point to the writer if nobody guesses right.

3 Next Year Cards BONUS, OPTIONAL

A time capsule that takes five minutes. Everyone fills out a card, and they all go in one envelope with the label card taped to the front. Put the envelope wherever the holiday dishes are stored, and open it at next year’s table.

TO PRINT, OR NOT

Print pages 2 to 6 on cardstock if you have it (regular paper works fine), single-sided. Cut along the dashed lines. Each page makes nine cards. More than nine people at the table? Print pages 5 and 6 twice.

No printer? Open this PDF on your phone and take turns choosing a question.

EVERYONE · EASY

•

If you could add one food to this table that has never been here before, what would it be?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

Who at this table made you laugh the hardest this year? What happened?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

What is something someone at this table taught you how to do?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

If our family had a theme song, what would it be?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

What is your favorite thing our family does only at this time of year?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

Which family rule would you change? Which one should never change?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

If you could ask any relative, living or not, one question, who would you ask and what would you ask?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

What about today will kids in our family 50 years from now think is old-fashioned?

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EVERYONE · EASY

•

What is one thing you learned this year that surprised you?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

When and where in our family's history would you *not* want to be eating this meal? Think floors, heat, light, and what was on the plate.

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

What did this holiday look like when you were ten? Who was at the table?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

Which dish here came from someone who is no longer with us? Who made it best?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

Where did our family live before here, and why did they move?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

Tell us about a time money was tight. What did the family do?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

What is something your parents or grandparents always used to say?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

What job did you have that you would never want to do again?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

What did a normal Saturday look like when you were a kid?

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STORY · ASK SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS

• •

What is the most trouble you ever got into as a kid that you are willing to tell at this table?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What is something
you have today that
someone before you
went without?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What is one thing you
hope our family is still
doing 30 years from
now?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What is one value you
got from this family
that you want to pass
on?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

Who outside our
family helped make us
who we are?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What is something
hard that turned out
to be good for you?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

When were you most
proud of someone at
this table?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What do you wish you
had asked someone
before they were
gone?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What would you want
the great-grandkids to
know about this year?

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DEEP · TAKE YOUR TIME

...

What do you know
now that you wish you
had known at 20?

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WHO SAID IT?

Something small from this year that I am grateful for:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

A moment from this year I wish I could replay:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

Something I have that a kid 100 years ago would be amazed by:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

A hard thing from this year that I am grateful for anyway:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

Something someone at this table did that they probably don't know mattered to me:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

The best ordinary day I had this year:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

Something I used to take for granted, and don't anymore:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

Something about this family I would never trade:

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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WHO SAID IT?

A person who helped me this year (describe them, no names):

Fold it. Drop it in the bowl. No names.

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NEXT YEAR

One thing I hope is different
by next year:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

By this time next year, I
predict our family will:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

Something I want to learn or
try before next year:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

What I think the youngest
person here will be into next
year:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

Something I want to
remember about tonight:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

Right now my favorite food,
song and place are:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

One way I want to show up
better for someone at this
table:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

My guess for who will be at
next year's table:

Name _____ Age ____

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NEXT YEAR

Next Year Cards

Sealed at our table on

Open at next year's table.

NO PEEKING.

Tape this card to the envelope

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Inheritance is what you leave them. Heritage is who they are when they get it.

If the stories start flowing, keep going

The best answers at your table are raw material. Write the good ones down, or record the grandparents telling them on your phone. Their voices are part of the inheritance.

When you are ready to turn those stories into something your family can carry forward, these are free on the Resources page:

- **The Family Legacy Workbook**: eleven short sections that take a family from its roots and stories to written values, a credo, and a family mark of its own.
- **Our Family Crest**: a coloring page for younger kids. Print one per child.
- **What Are You Actually Building Wealth For?**: an essay on why family wealth so rarely lasts, and what decides whether it does.
- **The Eagle Kept Showing Up**: how one family put its values into three words and a symbol.



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Scan to open the free resources on your phone.

Free to print and share with your family and friends. Please leave the credit line on the cards.

Tim Fergestad, Ph.D., is a scientist and investor. He writes about thinking better, acting deliberately, owning more of your life, and living it well.