PUFFIN PROBLEMS

The clowns of the sea are having a sad year.
A woman in South Sudan braids dry grass in a beautiful pattern. This traditional grass craft is called “audek.” It is not just pretty. It is functional! Abuk Yel had to leave her home. South Sudan has experienced devastating floods for three years. The floods forced many like the Yel family out of their homes. This mother of six will use these braided mats to make walls for a new shelter. Her family will live in the braided grass house.
Read your WORLDkids from cover to cover, and then you’ll be ready to complete this crossword based on story details found in this issue. Solve the colored clues first if a word has you stumped!

ACROSS
4 A big desert in Africa
5 Clowns of the sea
6 A food ___ distributes supplies to needy people.
9 Someone who lives next door or nearby
12 A type of Ciconiiform
13 This word comes from the Greek ethos.
15 The ___ School was for free and enslaved black children.
17 The heart is ___ above all things . . . Jeremiah 17:9
18 A period of low rainfall
21 Dirty clothes to be washed
22 Where glassblowers place glass placed to cool down
26 The spacecraft that orbited Jupiter
27 A national park in California
28 “E pluribus unum” is the ___ of the United States..

DOWN
1 People who raise cattle
2 Workers from this country helped build the Transcontinental Railroad.
3 Where ivory comes from
4 A language of Uganda
7 A two-wheeled vehicle
8 Whoever has a ___ eye will be blessed . . . Proverbs 22:9
10 To repair, fix, or bring back to an original condition
11 The ___ deserves his wages. 1 Timothy 5:18
14 A building where people live
16 The type of gas used in glassblowers’ ovens
19 The ___ Belt is between Rocky Planets and Gas Giants.
22 The jewel of Africa
24 To spin or move in a circle
25 He gives to the ___ their food . . . Psalm 147:9

COLORS
- Not a knife or a fork
- Opposite of far
- A canine, pup
- Opposite of in
- What you do when you’re tired

Answers on page 5
Elevator Lab To Open

A tower rises high above the city of Atlanta, Georgia. It took 3,000 tons of steel to build the massive structure. The tower is not for people to live and work in. It's actually a test lab. TK Elevators will use the state-of-the-art shaft to test elevators for safety. Engineers will try out all kinds of elevator designs, including “twin elevators.” Those are two different elevators that share the same shaft. One elevator car stays above the other one. This saves space and time while carrying passengers up and down between floors.

How cold is too cold for an elevator to operate well? Engineers want to find out. An environmental chamber in the lab will help them study how elevators work in extreme temperatures. (Brrrrrrrrrrrrr)

The testing facility will open in February. According to TK Elevators, the lab is the largest elevator test tower in the Western Hemisphere!

Snoopy Goes to Space

A familiar fuzzy figure is headed to space. Snoopy, Charlie Brown’s pet beagle, will don a space suit designed by NASA. He’ll launch in a new rocket in February. The five-ounce plush toy has an important job on the ship. The little guy will tell NASA when the unmanned Artemis I spacecraft enters zero gravity. At zero gravity, the craft has flown beyond the reach of Earth’s gravitational pull. Everything on board is weightless at that point. NASA uses stuffed animals on flights for good reason. When they start to float, that’s the sign: Weightlessness has been achieved. Since the toys are soft and light, they won’t accidentally break anything onboard. And they can’t press any important buttons! There won’t be any real people on this spacecraft as it circles the Moon and returns to Earth. It’s a practice run without astronauts.

NASA announced the space launch the same day the second season of Snoopy in Space was released. The Apple TV series follows the beloved beagle on adventures to the International Space Station and outer space.
During the early months of the pandemic, many people stayed home. Dogs were thrilled! The animals thrive in groups—and for pet dogs, the people they live with form their “pack.” But lately, more people are back in offices, classrooms, and businesses. That leaves all those pups home alone. Owners are finding their pooches suffering from “separation anxiety.” And when a lonely dog is sad, nervous, or bored, bad habits can form. Think: chewing, wetting, or whining all day. To help relieve some stress, pet stores are promoting gifts for home-alone pets. Rover.com suggests toys that dispense treats like the Snuffle Mat. This fluffy mat is like a puzzle the pet must solve. Dogs use their sniffers to search for treats hidden in the mat. A Snuggle Puppy is a stuffed animal with a battery-powered heartbeat and a comforting heat pack. Fido can snuggle up and feel like his human pal is nearby. And some fancy pet cameras can give out treats, roll around like robots, or play light laser tag with bored pets. Can toys replace the real pats and playtime that owners share with their dogs? Not a chance. But they might help soothe worried pets while their owners are away.

Mister Rogers Statue

Rollins College President Grant Cornwell whisked away the drape covering a new bronze sculpture. The work, called A Beautiful Day for a Neighbor, shows Fred Rogers wearing a familiar sweater and sneakers. Mr. Rogers was a beloved children's TV host. He died in 2003. According to the school, Mr. Rogers graduated from Rollins College in Florida in 1951 with a major in music. He was best known for writing and appearing in 912 episodes of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. The show ran on public television from 1968 to 2001.

Paul Day is a British artist. He designed the sculpture. The Mr. Rogers statue stands over seven feet tall and weighs more than 3,000 pounds. It shows Mr. Rogers surrounded by children, puppets from the show, and the Neighborhood Trolley. “My hope is that this piece will bring joy and inspiration to many people, just as Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood did for generations,” says Mr. Day.

Lonely Pets

During the early months of the pandemic, many people stayed home. Dogs were thrilled! The animals thrive in groups—and for pet dogs, the people they live with form their “pack.” But lately, more people are back in offices, classrooms, and businesses. That leaves all those pups home alone. Owners are finding their pooches suffering from “separation anxiety.” And when a lonely dog is sad, nervous, or bored, bad habits can form. Think: chewing, wetting, or whining all day. To help relieve some stress, pet stores are promoting gifts for home-alone pets. Rover.com suggests toys that dispense treats like the Snuffle Mat. This fluffy mat is like a puzzle the pet must solve. Dogs use their sniffers to search for treats hidden in the mat. A Snuggle Puppy is a stuffed animal with a battery-powered heartbeat and a comforting heat pack. Fido can snuggle up and feel like his human pal is nearby. And some fancy pet cameras can give out treats, roll around like robots, or play light laser tag with bored pets. Can toys replace the real pats and playtime that owners share with their dogs? Not a chance. But they might help soothe worried pets while their owners are away.
Thousands of storms churn on Jupiter all the time. They make beautiful, colorful swirls across the gas planet. One of those storms is bigger than the others. It’s the famous Great Red Spot that can be seen through strong telescopes on Earth. Now scientists know more about the monster storm that is so large it could swallow the Earth. The giant storm is deeper than anyone ever thought.

The gigantic Great Red Spot is about 10,000 miles wide! It’s also between 200 and 300 miles deep. Three-dimensional photographs of the storm show that it looks like a flat pancake. But new scientific data proves that that storm is anything but flat. Scientists think there might not be a hard cutoff at the bottom of the storm. That’s possible because Jupiter is a “gas giant.” It might not have a rocky mantle or molten core like Earth. The part that can be seen is made of hydrogen gas.

Scott Bolton of Southwest Research Institute studies the Great Red Spot. “It probably fades out gradually and keeps going down,” he says. His team is using NASA’s Juno spacecraft to gather information about Jupiter’s storms.

Juno helps scientists peek through the gas planet’s thick clouds. The spacecraft has flown over the spot twice. Tools on Juno gather data. They measure the enormous storm and the gravity field around the planet. That information may help scientists figure out how deep the Great Red Spot is.

A microwave device on Juno captures the planet’s temperatures. The microwave data helps scientists create heat maps. They will study the maps as they try to calculate the Great Red Spot’s depth.

“I wouldn’t want to be too quick to guess,” Mr. Bolton told reporters about the scientists’ studies. “The Great Red Spot is the largest and that makes it special by itself. And you might expect that it might be deeper just because of that.”

Juno has orbited the solar system’s largest planet since 2016. NASA recently decided to extend the mission until 2025.

Scientists are sometimes surprised by new discoveries, but God is never surprised. He created Jupiter and its storm, and He knows exactly how deep it really is!
Out of nothingness, God formed the eight planets and set them in place to orbit a star. With care, He sprinkled space with other stars, moons, satellites, gases, dust, and rocks. The Creator carefully ordered our solar system around the Sun. The planets’ order is helpful when studying them. All eight fit into one of two categories: Gas Giants and Rocky Planets. Between the two sets of planets, a band of space debris also orbits the Sun. That band is called the Asteroid Belt.

The Rocky Planets are the four planets closest to the Sun. They are Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. Each of these planets has a visible solid surface. Each has mountains, plains, and valleys. The four Rocky Planets are smaller than the four Gas Giant planets. They don’t have rings like some of the Gas Giants do either. Scientists have discovered water on the surface of Mercury, Earth, and Mars. (Venus does not have water.)

The Gas Giants are the four planets farthest from the Sun. They are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Gas Giants don’t have well-defined surfaces since these planets are mostly made of gases. There isn’t a clear boundary between a Gas Giant’s atmosphere and surface. Light gases like hydrogen and helium make up these planets. Scientists don’t yet know what’s at the center of the gas planets. It’s possible that one or more may have a hard core. Or maybe they’re like thick, super-hot soup deep inside.

Because Jupiter is so large, it has a great gravitational pull. Because it is made of gases, it absorbs space stuff like comets and rocky asteroids when they collide with the planet. In 1994, scientists noted a brown spot on Jupiter. It was a “scar” in the gas surface where a comet had been pulled into the planet by that strong gravity. Astronomers say the giant gas planets beyond the Asteroid Belt sometimes protect the Rocky Planets from collisions with objects hurtling through space.

Isn’t it wonderful that God placed the planets in our solar system just the way He did?
The Great Green Wall project was a great big idea. African countries aimed to plant trees across the entire continent. The nearly 5,000-mile line was supposed to hold back the Sahara Desert. But it turns out that smaller projects might work better.

The effort began in 2007. The goal was for the trees to cross the expansive Sahel region by 2030. (Read about the Sahel in “Africa’s Belt” at kids.wng.org/node/5231.) But millions of the planted trees died. They couldn’t get enough water.

Only a tiny bit of the original goal was met. And it would cost a LOT to finish—$43 billion dollars. So the project has changed. Instead of a huge wall of trees, people are trying smaller “patchwork” projects to keep the desert in check. And those projects are helping communities as well as the land.

Ibrahima Fall is the chief of a village in Senegal. He planted a citrus orchard in 2016. He put the trees near a water source on his land. It is one of 800 small orchards around a town called Kebemer.

“This orchard brings income that allows me to take care of my family,” he says. The peanuts he planted before weren’t as profitable. The trees have made the soil richer. He can grow tomatoes and onions as well.

The village used money from the orchard to build homes with concrete bricks instead of straw. It also upgraded a well. People bought more sheep, goats, and chickens.

The newest projects in Senegal are 20 circular gardens. Larger trees in the circles protect the weaker ones. The gardens’ curving rows hold moringa, sage, papaya, and mango trees. Those do well in dry climates. They are planted so that their roots grow inward. That helps keep water in the garden. So far, these gardens are thriving. That’s good news and good food for the people who tend them.

**WHY?** If an idea fails, perseverance and rethinking might help produce a new plan. Galatians 6:9 tells us, “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”
How can a desert grow?
The process is called desertification. It changes land that could grow plants into desert. That leaves less fertile land for the people who live there. They may not be able to raise crops or animals for food.

Lots of things cause desertification:

**Drought:** Lack of rain can kill plants. Without plants to hold it down, good soil may blow away.

**Overgrazing:** Animals keep eating vegetation in one spot without giving it time to grow back.

**Deforestation:** People cut down forests without replanting them.

**Rapid population growth:** More people suddenly live in one spot. They use up resources like wood and water.

**Fire:** Plants’ roots help keep soil in place. If fire burns vegetation, soil can erode. That means soil is removed by wind or water.

Notice a pattern? Plants are important for keeping good dirt in place. If they are gone, the soil can wash or blow away. That’s why planting new trees and other plants can help—as long as they survive.

Some say the Sahara is creeping southward. But some scientists say otherwise. “The Sahara is not advancing, but fluctuating like waves on the ocean,” says researcher Stefanie Herrmann. That’s because there is less vegetation on the edges of the desert when there is less rain. When more rain came, more plants grew.

Land managers saw areas where lots of plant life was growing in Niger. But that mostly stopped at the border with Nigeria. That seemed strange. Nigeria gets more rain. *Smithsonian Magazine* reports that the difference was in how farmers managed trees.

The farmers in Niger protected useful trees and let them grow.

When God makes everything right, He will restore the desert.

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus.* — Isaiah 35:1

**QUICK CHECK**

1. **churn**
   a) create over time
   b) grow and adapt
   c) move or swirl rapidly

2. **categories**
   a) divisions of people or things that are alike
   b) names or titles
   c) objects in a physical set or collection

3. **expansive**
   a) narrow
   b) vast
   c) eroding

4. **fertile**
   a) able to grow crops
   b) rotting
   c) barren

**PRAY:** For those who lack fertile ground and water for survival, especially in the Sahel, and for those studying ways to improve those areas.
Take a car ride on Tioga Road. Forests packed with sequoia trees rise up along the way. Beautiful blue lakes flash past. Wildflower meadows stretch away beside you. The road reaches 10,000 feet in elevation. Chinese Americans constructed this road through California’s Yosemite National Park in just 130 days!

That was way back in 1883. At last, Chinese Americans are getting recognition for their work.

How? An old laundry building used by Chinese workers has been turned into a kind of museum. Visitors can go inside. They will learn about how Chinese Americans helped create the national park. The building is part of a cluster of structures. These will make up the new Yosemite History Center.

“Chinese people have been a big part of communities throughout the Sierra Nevada for a really long time,” says Park Ranger Adam Ramsey. “It’s about time that we started sharing that history here in Yosemite.”

Chinese workers did more than build Tioga Road. Some were cooks at Yosemite. Others served as hotel workers, laundry workers, and gardeners. Many first came to California during the Gold Rush. Around then, work was hard to find in China. They brought skills learned in their homeland about construction, engineering, agriculture, medicine, and textiles.

Some think of Chinese people as “new” to the United States. But the Yosemite History Center shows: Many Chinese families have lived there for more than 150 years.
Shops. Restaurants. Hotels. Giant sequoia forests. Breathtaking views. Chinese immigrants helped make the Yosemite we know and love today. But for a long time, their hard work was erased from memory. Why? In 1882, the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act. The law declared: No more Chinese people can come to the United States looking for work. Chinese immigrants didn’t enter the United States again for 60 years.

Why would the U.S. Congress pass such a law? Sadly, the reasons are unjust. Sometimes, people who act or look differently are treated with suspicion or even hatred. That happened to the Chinese. In 1882, jobs were scarce. Some laborers on the West Coast blamed Chinese workers for low wages. Some of them wanted “racial purity.” Government officials listened to their demands and outlawed Chinese immigration. (God made all peoples in His image. All are descended from the same ancestors. Because of this, people from every race and nation on Earth have dignity. God hates it when one people group assumes it is superior to another. In Jesus, all are made equal. See Galatians 3:28.)

Do you know your ancestry? The majority of Americans come from families that immigrated from another part of the world. Every people group brings unique gifts to America. Chinese immigrants brought incredible diligence. They worked hard. They even helped build the Transcontinental Railroad!

“E pluribus unum” is the traditional motto of the United States. The Latin words mean, “Out of many, one.” Many people groups have come together to make a strong nation. But the story of Chinese workers in the United States reminds us that this process—and the people involved in it—have been far from perfect.
Enslaved and free black children bend over their schoolwork at the Bray School in Virginia. Their teacher, a white woman named Ann Wager, shows them how to read, spell, and do math.

That was centuries ago—before the Revolutionary War.

What’s happening at the Bray School now?

It’s moving! The school building is headed to a new home in Colonial Williamsburg.

People forgot about the Bray School for a long time. The building sat hidden in plain sight on the College of William & Mary campus. Now the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation has bought it. Workers plan to make the school look how it used to back in the 1700s.

Colonial Williamsburg is a living history museum. Living museums recreate the way a place might have looked in the past. Workers at Colonial Williamsburg dress up like Virginians from the 1700s. They talk like them too. If you make a visit to Colonial Williamsburg, you might see an old-style blacksmith at his forge. You might spot a brickmaker or wigmaker at work. Williamsburg actors portray what life was like back then. Each building you pass will seem to belong in another century.

The Bray School will fit right in. It is likely the oldest surviving schoolhouse for African Americans. Hundreds of black children learned there from 1760 to 1774. Workers should finish restoring the school by 2024.

Researchers have many questions about the school. What did the parents of pupils who attended think of it? Why did people start the school? What happened to the students after they graduated?
Imagine this. Mrs. Wager has finished her spelling and math lessons for the day. She opens up a book containing the Anglican catechism. (Have you ever learned a catechism? A catechism is a series of questions and answers. They teach about the Christian faith.)

Mrs. Wager reads:
“How does recognizing God as Creator inform your understanding of His creation?”

Her students answer:
“I acknowledge that God created for His own glory everything that exists. He created human beings, male and female, in His image…”

Mrs. Wager dedicated her time to teaching black students who weren’t allowed to attend public schools. The Bray School existed to spread Christian education to African Americans—both free and enslaved. This might set off some questions in your mind:

If all humans are created in God’s image, how could some people believe it was okay to own other people and treat them like animals or livestock?

Did Mrs. Wager really care about her students? Did she approve of slavery?

At Colonial Williamsburg, a woman named Nicole Brown portrays Mrs. Wager. She dresses up like a tutoress (teacher) from the 1700s. She talks with tourists. Ms. Brown studies Mrs. Wager. She reads letters written by people who knew her. She checks out the books Mrs. Wager used in her teaching. What was Mrs. Wager like? What did she believe? Ms. Brown makes her best guess.

Mrs. Wager was the only teacher ever employed at the Bray School. When she died, the school closed. We can’t know for sure why this happened. We do know that black people were about to face more terribly difficult times. The next centuries would bring more slavery, mistreatment, murder, and discrimination. Perhaps around Mrs. Wager’s death, times were changing for the worse. Maybe people were growing more uncomfortable with the idea of educating black students.

Nicole Brown wrestles to understand how Mrs. Wager might have seen the world. “It’s okay to struggle with the idea that America’s past is flawed,” she says on the Colonial Williamsburg website.

The Bible is clear: No person should ever own or mistreat another. But people are fallen. In history, even Christians have made dreadful errors.

God shows no partiality.
— Romans 2:11

1. Which did Chinese Americans build?
   a) Tioga Road
   b) the Great Wall
   c) Mount Rushmore
   d) the hanging gardens

2. “E pluribus unum” means _________.
   a) one for all, all for one
   b) out of one, many
   c) out of many, one
   d) one nation under God

3. Who studied at the Bray School?
   a) free and enslaved black children
   b) William & Mary College students
   c) parents
   d) historical reenactors

4. What is a catechism?
   a) a history book
   b) a type of acting
   c) questions and answers about faith
   d) a type of school

5. How does the term “E pluribus unum” apply to a country like the United States?
What do a motorcycle, money, and a meeting with a president have in common? A teenager named Emmanuel Tuloe. The teen from Liberia became a national hero when he returned a huge amount of lost cash to its owner. As a big thank you, the teenager got a cash reward, a new mattress, and a meeting with his country’s president, George Weah.

Emmanuel dropped out of school in the seventh grade. That’s when he started running a taxi service with his motorcycle. He worked to earn money for his family. The teenager was driving his motorcycle taxi when he saw a bundle wrapped in a
plastic bag. It had been dropped on the side of the road. When he opened it, he found money inside—a LOT of money. $50,000!

“I was afraid because it was plenty (of money), and so I brought it home and gave it to my aunty to keep until the owner could ask for it,” he explains.

In the meantime, Musu Yancy was looking everywhere for the money she lost. The businesswoman went on the radio, “crying for her money and appealing to anyone finding it,” says Emmanuel. He took the entire $50,000 to her.

Many people applaud Emmanuel for returning what he found to its rightful owner. But sadly, some people mock the teen. “They say he was foolish not to keep it. Even some of Emmanuel’s friends poke fun at him for doing the honorable thing. “They tell me I will never get rich in my lifetime. They say because I returned such an amount of money, I will live and die poor,” he says.

Proverbs 12:22 says, “Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act faithfully are His delight.” Emmanuel stands behind his decision to return the money. He encourages other people to live honestly.

With gratitude, the businesswoman rewarded Emmanuel with cash and gifts that amounted to about $1,500. He plans to share the reward with the people who were in his taxi when he found the money. “But the mattress I got will be given to my grandma,” he says firmly.

Play by the rules. Take turns. Show kindness. Have a thankful heart. Respect authority. Obey the law.

Good citizens know that character counts. They also know that how someone acts when something good (or bad!) happens matters. That’s what ethics are all about. Ethics help us decide what to do when we must make choices.

All day long, people choose. Should I tell the truth or lie? Will I be generous or stingy? Will I work hard or take the easy way out? Should I be a friend or foe? How we respond illustrates what we value.

The word “ethics” comes from the Greek ethos. That word means “character.” Character shows someone’s way of thinking, feeling, and acting. Are you trustworthy? Respectful? Responsible? Fair? Caring? Hardworking? A good citizen? If you are, then you have strong ethics.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle called ethics “practical wisdom.” The Bible overflows with practical wisdom. Look at Proverbs. The whole book is dedicated to wisdom. The Old Testament prophet Micah reminds believers how to live. Micah 6:8 says, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

The Bible reminds us of the condition of our hearts. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” We can’t count on our hearts to make us good citizens. They can’t be trusted! But God knows us inside and out. He helps us choose strong, good ethics instead of selfishness. God gives us the Bible as a guide and an example of His perfect character. He gives us His Holy Spirit to help us make good decisions when tough choices come up. What a gift!
At Shiloh’s Community Market in Oakland, California, Sonia Lujan-Perez picks up chicken, celery, onions, bread, and potatoes for free. This will help her feed herself, her three-year-old daughter, and her 18-year-old son. She needs the extra food, especially with the cost of milk, citrus, spinach, and chicken so high.

“That is wonderful for me because I will save a lot of money,” she says.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people line up outside Shiloh Mercy House for its weekly food giveaway. Ministries like Shiloh Mercy House and its Community Market get their food from food banks. Have you ever visited or volunteered at a food bank? Tens of millions of people in the United States use food distribution spots. But these days, some families may get smaller servings or substitutions.

Here’s why. Over the last year, more people than usual have sought help buying food. But because of the pandemic’s impact, some supply chains have slowed down or broken. Transportation prices are up, so food is more expensive to move. Food factories lack workers. Often, grocery stores and food banks are left waiting for their goods.

Everything costs more. Some food banks are buying staples such as peanut butter for nearly double what they cost two years ago. Prices have gone up for canned green beans, tuna, and peaches. Food banks pay extra for frozen fish and chicken too. Even dry oatmeal costs 17% more than it used to.

Did you know so many people have extra needs right now? Food banks can’t go on paying double or triple the price for food that they hope to give away. Think about the neighbors around you. Who might need food? Is there something you can do to help?

Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor. — Proverbs 22:9

Trouble for Food Banks

It’s important to know that people around us may have extra needs this year. Maybe God is calling us to help.
Jesus loves people. He wants His followers to love too. That’s why He commands us to love our neighbors. Some of your neighbors may be hungry this year. What does that mean for you? You can read in each of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the first four New Testament books) the story of a boy who helped feed the hungry. A large crowd gathered to listen to Jesus. As the day drew on, they needed to eat. The disciples had no food to give them. The boy had five bread loaves and two fish. (John 6:9) He gave them up for the crowd. As Jesus handed out the food, it multiplied in His and His disciples’ hands. Those five loaves and two fish became enough to feed many—with 12 baskets of leftovers!

Here are some ideas for helping neighbors in a hard time:

1. Drop off groceries.
2. Make a batch of cookies or brownies and leave it for your neighbors with a note.
3. Spring is on the way. What can you grow in your backyard, or even in a pot on a window sill, that could bless your neighbors? Supply chain problems drive prices up. There are no supply chain issues between your back yard and your neighbor’s front porch!
4. Ask your mom and dad if you can invite people into your home for a meal.
5. Volunteer at a food bank.

Remember: As you think about blessing your neighbors, it’s important to remember that . . .

1. You don’t need to impress them with your good cooking or a fancy house. Show hospitality to demonstrate what Jesus is like: generous and compassionate!
2. You can’t feed every hungry person. But you can feed someone something. You can’t do everything, but you can start somewhere. Jesus can do everything. He can even multiply your giving.
3. You have talents. What need do they match? If you’re not a cook, can you help a neighbor in another way? Can you shovel snow? Tutor younger kids? Bring in mail for an elderly shut-in?

**QUIZ**

1. applaud
   a) approve or praise
   b) disagree with
   c) run away from

2. foe
   a) relative
   b) friend
   c) enemy

3. bountiful
   a) miserly
   b) generous
   c) healthy

4. compassionate
   a) kind
   b) energetic
   c) unfriendly

Answers on page 5
Vojin Kusic’s head was spinning with ideas. Could he design a house that turned to please his wife? The 72-year-old Bosnian designed and built a rotating house for his wife Ljubica, whose name means “loved one.” He wanted her to be able to orient their home any way she wanted to. The green house sits (or spins!) in Srbac. That’s a small town in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina. The house can turn in a full circle.

“After I reached an advanced age and after my children took over the family business, I finally had enough time to task myself with granting my wife her wish,” explains Mr. Kusic. Many years ago, Mr. Kusic built his family’s first home. For that house, Mrs. Kusic wanted the bedrooms to face the Sun in the mornings. But that meant the living room faced away from the road. After a while, Mrs. Kusic complained that she “could not see people entering our front yard.” Mr. Kusic listened to his wife’s concerns. Then he got busy. He redid the house so that the living room faced the road. The Kusics lived in the remodeled house while their three children grew up.

Six years ago, the family shuffled the rooms of the house again. Mr. and Mrs. Kusic moved to the ground floor so that their son and his family could live upstairs.

“Once again, this time on the ground floor, I had to start tearing down some walls,” says the thoughtful carpenter. But he realized his wife was likely to desire more alterations in time. So, “I decided to build a new, rotating house so that she can spin it as she pleases,” explains creative Mr. Kusic.

The master builder (who did not have the chance to go to college) designed and built the new rotating house by himself. Electric motors and the wheels of an old military transport vehicle turn the house.

“Now our front door also rotates. So if she spots unwanted guests heading our way, she can spin the house and make them turn away,” Mr. Kusic jokes.

God desires sacrificial love between husbands and wives. When Mr. Kusic heard his wife’s concerns, he set out to solve them. He used the skills God gave him to create a fun and useful gift for his beloved spouse.
Build it, then: Crank it. Spin it. Raise it. Lower it. Shift it. Rearrange it. These days, the sky is the limit when it comes to designing buildings that move. Some office structures rotate. Houses swivel. Floors float. Motors move gigantic buildings. More and more buildings are being designed to make life easier for the people who use them—by adapting in unexpected ways.

There was a shift in architectural design after the influenza pandemic of 1918. To keep germs away, builders focused on putting smooth, easy-to-clean surfaces in the homes they built. They added skylights and balconies so that people could have plenty of sunshine and fresh air. Laundry chutes were popular. These indoor slides used gravity to send dirty clothes to the washroom. The chutes kept germs from moving all over the house. Around the same time period, builders were creating buildings with moving parts like machines!

François Massau built a rotating house in Belgium in 1958. He built the spinning house so that his sickly wife could enjoy the warm sunshine as much as possible.

**Villa Girasole** is in Verona, Italy. Its name means “sunflower,” which is fitting. The home turns to follow the Sun’s movement. It makes a complete circle in nine hours and 20 minutes.

At the touch of a button, Villa Hush Hush lifts 130 feet in the air. Residents in the London, England, building can choose to have the privacy of trees, or they can raise the building to enjoy a treetop view.

The Sun can be scorching hot in Gothenburg, Sweden. Architects planned for heat when they built the **Kuggen Building**. Motors twist a sunscreen around the building to provide shade.

**Principality Stadium** in Cardiff, Wales, is the second-largest stadium in the world. It has a fully retractable roof that is held together by 200,000 nuts and bolts. It takes 20 minutes for motors to fully open the roof.

The Orchid House in the United Kingdom doesn’t spin. Its outside walls are fixed in place. But walls inside the house can be shifted around. That makes changing room sizes easy!

What’s next? A house that can walk? Well... Engineers in China moved an entire building using “robot legs.” The legs slowly walked the building from one location to another!
Don't have a cow. *Sell* a cow. An average 1,370-pound steer is worth about $1,630. That's quite a chunk of change!

Who gets the money? Not just the rancher. Some dollars go to the slaughterhouse (the place the cow is butchered). Some go to the operator of the feed lot (the place cows are “finished”—fed and fattened up for slaughter). Ranchers like Rusty Kemp want to cut out the *middleman*. A middleman is a person or company buying goods from the person who produces them. After buying, the middleman resells the goods to buyers.

So: A rancher raises a cow. The rancher is the *producer*. A beef company buys the cow. Then it finishes, slaughters, and sells the beef. The beef company is the *middleman*. When your family buys the meat in a store, you are the *consumers*. That’s the end of the line in this process. Cutting out the middleman could mean that more money goes to the producer. It might even lower prices for consumers.
Meet rancher Rusty Kemp. For years, he’s grumbled about rock-bottom prices paid for the cattle he raises in central Nebraska. Beef prices at grocery stores keep climbing. Why isn’t he, the rancher, seeing some of the bucks buyers shell out for beef? Did you know that only four companies slaughter over 80% of America’s cows? Those companies set the price for beef. Let’s say you spend a dollar on beef. In the 1970s, 35 cents of that dollar would go into the pockets of ranchers and farmers. Now, only 14 cents does. As the amount given to ranchers shrinks, the amount taken by big beef companies grows.

Is that fair? Ranchers don’t think so. Cattle start out on their farms. The cattlemen spend a lot of money caring for the animals as they grow. These ranchers invest a lot before the animals ever get to the feedlots and slaughterhouses of big beef companies.

“We’ve been complaining about it for 30 years,” says Mr. Kemp. “It’s probably time somebody does something about it.”

Mr. Kemp launched a bold plan: Raise more than $300 million from ranchers. Use the money to build a new beef production plant controlled by farmers, the people who raise the cows. Now crews are constructing the Sustainable Beef plant on nearly 400 acres near North Platte, Nebraska. Will this new beef processing plant succeed? The ranchers face a hard task. Big beef suppliers have efficient factories. They can process a lot of beef in a short time and sell it at the prices they choose. How could a smaller plant like Sustainable Beef do the same?

Sustainable Beef owners plan to use more modern equipment than the big beef companies. They want to pay employees more and allow them to work more convenient hours. Will this help workers stick with the company? Sustainable Beef officials hope so.

David Briggs is the CEO (chief executive officer) of Sustainable Beef. “Cattle people are risk takers,” he says. “They’re ready to take a risk.”

Over, Middleman

Right now, four companies control most of the beef in the United States. Eight of every 10 cows are processed by Cargill, JBS, Tyson Foods, or National Beef Packing.

Sustainable Beef and other companies want more options. If these smaller, farmer-owned companies succeed, farmers will have more control over the whole process—from calf to steak to grocery store shelves. Then will farmers finally get a bigger bite of the burger?

The Bible says that “the laborer deserves his wages.” (1 Timothy 5:18) It is important that people in the cattle business, like all honest industries, are paid fairly for their work.

Quiz

1. What makes the Kusic house rotate?
   a) a rope pulley system
   b) electric motors and wheels
   c) batteries
   d) a conveyor belt

2. Villa Girasole turns to follow the movement of what?
   a) the Moon
   b) storm clouds
   c) the Sun
   d) neighbors

3. Which group is starting Sustainable Beef?
   a) middlemen
   b) ranchers
   c) JBS
   d) National Beef Packing

4. A middleman ____.
   a) is a farmer
   b) buys from consumers and sells to producers
   c) buys from producers and sells to consumers
   d) is a producer

5. What does the Bible mean when it says “the laborer deserves his wages”?

Answers on page 5
Puffins are seabirds with colorful beaks. Most of Maine's puffins nest on four small islands. About 1,500 breeding pairs live in the state. They catch fish such as herring and sand lance to feed their young. Only about a quarter of the bird pairs were able to raise chicks this summer. That's far fewer than normal.

This is a discouraging report. But it comes after good news. In the last few years, the puffins in Maine have been doing great. In 2019, they had one of their best hatching years on record. The Gulf of Maine had a cool year in 2019. The puffins' favorite fish abounded. This year, on the other hand, was a hot one. Gulf fish do not survive as well in warmer water.

For a species like puffins, one bad year counts. The birds also live in Canada and on the other side of the ocean. Internationally, they're listed as “vulnerable.” That's why researchers count puffins so carefully. Puffins are sometimes called “clowns of the sea” because of their funny faces. But there's nothing funny about dwindling puffin populations.

Still, it's not time to panic yet. God is caring for puffins, and adult puffins are still surviving well. Most species go through cycles of growth and decline. Still, scientists watch. They want the puffin species to survive. And for that, the more babies, the better!

Look at the birds of the air: They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? — Matthew 6:26
Maine

Ciconiiformes (pronounced SIC-oh-NEE-uh-FORM-ees)

These graceful birds usually catch fish or amphibians with their long bills. God gave them legs suited to wading in water. They live all over the world. Examples: herons, storks, spoonbills. Are flamingos ciconiiformes? Most scientists today say yes. But for a long time, ornithologists (people who study birds) weren’t sure. Flamingos have webbed feet like anseriformes, but long legs for wading too. So scientists often put flamingos in a group all by themselves.

Anseriformes (pronounced ann-SER-uh-FORM-ees)

For many of us, this class of birds is a little closer to home. Anseriformes have webbed feet and swim well. Examples: ducks, geese, swans.

Shorebirds. Shorebirds live on . . . the shore! That might mean seashore, or inland shores like lakes and marshlands. These birds like to be near their food sources—crustaceans, tadpoles, worms, and bugs. The Creator equipped them with bills that can dig through mud or sand for prey. Examples: oystercatchers, plovers, sandpipers.

Seabirds. Seabirds get their food from farther out to sea. God gave them waterproof feathers and layers of fat to protect them from cold. Their bodies can even filter out extra salt from ocean water. Examples: albatross, puffins, frigatebirds, penguins.

Where in the world can puffins be found?

There are three types of puffins: Atlantic, Horned, and Tufted.

Water birds also belong to groups with more scientific names. Do you recognize any birds from the following two families?
Young elephants in Mozambique should sprout tusks around two years of age. But in the current crop of calves, many have turned out tuskless. Why could that be?

Tusks help elephants dig for water, strip bark for food, and joust with other elephants. If you’re an elephant, you want a good set of tusks. Right?

Maybe. Tusks have a downside too. People want them for ivory. Greed drives poachers to kill elephants to get those ivory tusks.

Mozambique had years of civil war. Fighters on both sides slaughtered elephants for ivory to pay for the war. In one part of the country, around nine out of every 10 elephants were killed.

Not all elephants have tusks. Genes are responsible for whether elephants inherit tusks from their parents. (Genes hold the code that determines a creature’s design. Genes decide how each living thing will look and function.) Tusklessness was once rare in African savanna elephants. Now it has become more common. You can think of it this way: Brown is the most common human eye color. Green is the least common. Imagine you started seeing green-eyed people just as often as brown-eyed people. That’s similar to what has happened to the elephants.

Before the war, about one out of every five elephants never developed tusks. These elephants tended to survive the war. That makes sense. Poachers didn’t want elephants that couldn’t provide ivory. Now those tuskless elephants are passing on their genes . . . and making tuskless babies.
Over time, a species’ genetics change. Animals adapt to their conditions. That’s not the same as evolution. African elephants may grow fewer tusks. But they’re not changing into a new species.

The theory of evolution says this: Over millions of years, one kind of animal can turn into another. Birds can come from dinosaurs. Humans and monkeys could have come from the same ancestor. But the theory of evolution is just that. It’s a theory. It matches the way many people see the world, especially if they do not believe that God created it.

But God did create all things. And He loves what He made. Adaptation actually shows God’s incredible care for His creatures. He created elephants with the ability to adjust to a new set of circumstances. Isn’t it a mercy that Mozambique’s elephants suddenly have protection against poachers written right into their genes?

We usually think of these types of adaptations happening over a timespan of hundreds or thousands of years. But these elephants have responded to new conditions fast. They have gone more tuskless over just 15 years.

Changes in elephants mean changes for plants surrounding them too. Scientists study the elephants’ poo. It shows elephants have shifted their eating habits. This makes sense. Many of them don’t have long tusks to peel bark from trees.

“The tuskless females ate mostly grass, whereas the tusked animals ate more legumes and tough woody plants,” says Robert Pringle, a biologist at Princeton University. “These changes will last for at least multiple elephant generations.”

He gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that cry. — Psalm 147:9

**AFRICAN ELEPHANT FACTS:**

**BIGGEST:** African elephants are the biggest land mammal in the world. A male can grow up to 13 feet tall and weigh 14,000 pounds. (Females are a little smaller.)

**LONGEST:** Baby elephants take longer to grow inside their mothers than other animals—almost two years. They also suck their trunks like human babies suck their thumbs.

**HUNGRIEST:** A grown elephant can eat up to 300 pounds of plant food (grass, fruit, roots, and bark) in one day.
Don’t turn off the furnace! Italian glassblowers use high-temperature furnaces to create beautiful glass art. Those furnaces must burn around the clock. Keeping the heat on is harder to do these days. Surging prices of methane gas make powering the glassblowers’ equipment extraordinarily expensive.

Italy’s glassblowing tradition is 1,200 years old. The art has been passed down through families for generations. “No machine can do what we do,” says master glassblower Davide Cimarost. He has been creating glass art for 42 years. He lives and works in Murano, an island community in the lagoon of Venice, Italy. Glassblowers like Mr. Cimarost can transform a red-hot blob of molten glass (called “lava” by the artists) into a beautiful vessel or piece of art.

A glassblower twists and turns a hot puddle of lava on the end of a hollow wand. *Heat, spin. Reheat, bend. Heat, swivel. Reheat, blow.* The artist gently blows into the wand. His breath creates a space inside the hot liquid glass. As he blows and turns, elegant shapes emerge. The bauble’s shape can be changed only when the material is about as hot as the liquid in a volcano. If it cools, the glass hardens. That’s one reason why a glassblower’s oven must stay hot. Additionally, if the furnace cools, the ceramic container inside could break. If that crucible cracks, it is very expensive to replace.

Methane powers the ovens. That gas burns at temperatures high enough to create crystal-clear glass. In fact, an Italian law says that glassblowers must use methane. But the price of methane is skyrocketing. It is five times higher than normal! Glassblowers have no choice but to pay those high gas prices to keep their furnaces burning.

“People are desperate,” says Gianni De Checchi. He is president of an artisans’ association. “If it continues like this, and we don’t find solutions to the sudden and abnormal gas prices, the entire Murano glass sector will be in serious danger.”

The higher-than-normal prices are hitting Italy hard. The country imports most of its gas. Shipping delays, more demand for energy, and shortages are causing the price leap. Glassblowers hope that methane gas prices cool down soon.

As we learn about economies, we also learn when soaring prices harm others and their work. Christians can pray and when possible, support those people with purchases as well.
John Almaguer was a kid when he saw first saw blown glass. It was smooth, wildly shaped, and colorful. He thought to himself, “I just have to try that!” In college, Mr. Almaguer took his first glassblowing class.

Livio Serena was Mr. Almaguer’s teacher. Mr. Serena was from Murano, Italy. That’s where some of the best glassblowers in the world live. But the craft didn’t start out there. Glassblowers’ first workshops were in nearby Venice, Italy.

In 1291, all glassblowers had to move their studios out of Venice and onto the island of Murano. Some people say that the artists had to move because the authorities thought their furnaces could burn down Venice’s wooden buildings. But many people believe that the move to Murano was to keep glassblowing secrets safe.

Generations of glassblowers passed down the art’s secrets. People learned how to blow and shape glass by watching others do it. Most often, the tradition passed on through family members.

Good things should move from generation to generation. Deuteronomy 6:7 talks about passing on God’s promises and commandments. “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise,” it says.

Mr. Almaguer’s teachers taught him how to use three important pieces of glassblowing equipment: the furnace, the glory hole, and the annealer. Glassblowers keep hot-as-lava liquid glass inside a furnace. A glassblower reheats the glass inside the glory hole. (It’s hotter there than inside the furnace.) The annealer is where the glass is placed to cool down. Its temperature will slowly drop from 1,200 degrees to 100 degrees. (If it drops too quickly, the new glass piece will crack.)

Today, Mr. Almaguer has his own glassblowing studio in North Carolina. The titles he gave two of his favorite pieces give glory to God, the Master Artist. The first is called Divine Covenant. The other is titled One.
Dressed in his school uniform, Mathias Okwako jumps into the mud. Why? He’s searching for gold.

Mathias lives in Busia, Uganda. He is 17 years old. He belongs in school. But his school sits empty just across the road. Weeds grow in some classrooms!

Uganda’s schools have been fully or partially shut for more than 80 weeks during the coronavirus pandemic. No other nation’s schools have closed for such a long time.

Imagine you attend a school that suddenly closes for more than a year. You have no books to study. How will you learn useful skills to earn money as an adult? Mathias and other kids his age are losing their chance at education. Instead of going to school, they work in a swamp as gold miners.

For many kids around the world, school was interrupted during the pandemic. Most couldn’t go to school in person. Many parents had to scramble to find child care, or learn to homeschool on the fly while working at the same time.

In many parts of the globe, lessons moved online. Not so in Uganda. Uganda had major schooling problems even before the pandemic. Schools lacked qualified teachers. Many students dropped out before they graduated. When the pandemic came, the country couldn’t provide virtual schooling.

Uganda first shut down its schools in March 2020. That nation is now the only country in Africa where schools remain closed.

Teachers work alongside their former students in the swamp. A typical day of gold mining can bring in just over $2. That’s enough for a child to buy a pair of used shoes. Mathias purchased two pigs with his earnings. Other children also use the money to help look after their families. They often spend it on salt or soap.

Why is Mathias wearing his school uniform if there’s no school? He says he has nothing else to put on.

**Pray:** For Mathias and other children in Uganda. Ask God to send them everything they need to live and learn.

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**No School in Uganda**

Kids toil alongside adults at the mine.

**Why?** “No school” may sound fun . . . but what if school was canceled forever? It’s important to recognize reliable education as a blessing.
Why is Uganda poor? Almost half the people in Uganda live in poverty. Why? Only about half of all Ugandans have access to doctors and hospitals. Diseases such as malaria make people unable to work. Many Ugandans also need to be taught how to perform jobs that pay well.

Animals. People have cleared much land in Uganda. This destroyed the homes of many animals. But not to fear: You can still find leopards and lions in national parks. In Queen Elizabeth National Park, look for rare, tree-climbing lions. You'll also come across elephants, chimpanzees, gorillas, and many butterflies in Uganda. Check rivers for hippos and crocodiles.

Education. Ugandan kids are missing out on education right now. Normally, you would spot kids ages six to 13 on their way to school. After seven years, Ugandan teens may move on to secondary school (high school). After four years, students can attend school for another two years. Early private schools in Uganda were founded by Christian missionaries. Now education has continued to spread with government schools.

Language. Swahili and English are the official languages of Uganda. But many people groups call Uganda home. At least 30 other languages are spoken in Uganda too.

Food. Stop in the capital city of Kampala. Check the market for Uganda's staple food, matoke. (Matoke is a starchy cooking banana, similar to a plantain.) In northern Uganda, you'll find locals eating millet, sorghum, cornmeal, and vegetables. Some Ugandans live as livestock herders. Herders eat diets rich in butter and meat.

Rivers, farmland, gorillas, volcanoes . . . Uganda has it all. Winston Churchill (former British Prime Minister) called this lush spot “the jewel of Africa.” Buckle up. Let’s explore Uganda!

**QUIZ**

1. What is a crucible?
   a) an expensive ceramic container inside a furnace
   b) a hollow metal wand
   c) a batch of liquid glass also called lava
   d) a unit of methane gas

2. Where do the world’s best glassblowers live and learn?
   a) Asheville, North Carolina
   b) Venice, Italy
   c) Murano, Italy
   d) Paris, France

3. Why are Ugandan schools closed?
   a) the coronavirus pandemic
   b) clothing shortage
   c) high graduation rates
   d) Students can pay their own tutors.

4. Matoke is ________
   a) a type of school
   b) a cooking banana
   c) malaria
   d) a breed of butterfly

5. Explain why about half of Uganda’s population is poor.
This fall, people in Thailand flocked to rivers. They released small floats adorned with flowers and candles. Uh oh. Those cute little boats clog Thailand's waterways.

Thais release the floats—called krathongs—as part of a festival meant to honor a made-up goddess of water. They believe that as the krathongs float down the river, their misfortunes do too. But the Thais depend on clean water for life. Many krathongs are made from Styrofoam and colored with chemicals. That's bad for the river, and bad for Thais too.

Solutions? Some make krathongs out of river-friendly banana leaves. And right after the celebration, a cleanup crew scoops up as many Styrofoam boats as possible. Next stop, the landfill.

Young people in Sweden are going big for tiny homes. In that country, people can build houses without a permit (written permission from town government). They just have to follow a couple of rules. Non-permit houses must be smaller than 269 square feet. And they can't rise higher than 13.1 feet tall. Adventurous, younger homebuyers say, "Let's try it!"

Could you live in a tiny house? A tiny house costs less than a regular home. And you'd probably get to spend a lot of time outdoors. On the other hand, the minute you spilled a bowl of cereal, your whole house would be a wreck!

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. — 2 Corinthians 5:1

Tiny Gets Huge

Could you build a model of New York City out of sticks? Someone did. At least, a company crafted more than 175 models of New York landmarks. In the impressive setup at the New York Botanical Garden, more than 25 different little trains choo-choo past the mini city.

Many model train shows were canceled last year because of the pandemic. This year, the popular attractions have made a comeback around the United States.

A company called Applied Imagination, Ltd., makes the miniatures. Workers build with sticks, bits of fungus, pinecones, and other natural items. No dried berries or acorns are allowed. They learned that the hard way when squirrels once ate some of the display!

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More news shorts online everyday at kids.wng.org
**March of the Red Crabs**

Roads were closed. Beaches turned red with a flood of crawling crabs. Each year, millions of Australia’s red crabs leave their burrows in the rainforest on Christmas Island. They march for miles through woods. They cross roads, streams, and rocks to get to the beaches.

God gave these crabs instincts. Those instincts tell them exactly when to leave their burrows. They reach the beach just as high tide is falling. Each female crab lays up to 100,000 eggs in the surf.

Hatchlings live in tide pools while they grow. Then miraculously, these tiny new creatures make their own march to the rainforest to join their kin.

**Time To Move the Pelicans!**

Where are you going with those pelicans?

When winter comes, pelicans get on the move. In the wild, the birds would migrate on their own. They would find a warmer place to stay. But these birds live at the Liberec Zoo in northern Czech Republic. They need people’s help.

Workers got into kayaks and a boat. They captured the 10 pelicans on the zoo’s lake. The birds were hard to wrangle. Each weighs up to 33 pounds. Their wingspans can be greater than 10 feet!

Zookeepers were careful not to harm the pelicans. They delivered them safely to a heated enclosure. They’ll stay toasty warm there until spring.

**Oldest Star Map**

This disc was found in Germany in 1999. Scientists say it is 3,600 years old!

The disc is 12 inches in diameter. It is made of bronze and has a lovely blue-green color called a “patina.” That’s a colored film that forms on metal as it tarnishes over time. Gold symbols on the surface represent the Sun, Moon, and stars.

The British Museum in London says the “Nebra Sky Disc” is the world’s oldest surviving map of the heavens. It will be on display at the museum. The cluster of seven dots might represent the Pleiades, or “Seven Sisters.” Can you find that star group in the night sky?
Puffins are having a tough year (see page 22). But can you help these two out by finding the picture that matches their silhouette?