



**orange**

Visit [www.SamaritansPurse.org/occ](http://www.SamaritansPurse.org/occ) for more stories and videos about families who send boxes and the kids who receive them!



**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**  
**7 STEPS**  
TO A THANKFUL HEART

*A night of fun for the whole family!*



**Parent  
Cue**

**WE HAVE SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR. THIS MONTH, WE'RE EXCITED TO HELP YOUR FAMILY DEVELOP A HEART OF THANKFULNESS — WHILE YOU SHARE WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU WITH CHILDREN IN CRISIS AREAS AROUND THE WORLD.**

### Step 1 - Set the Stage



Parents, set aside an evening or weekend afternoon for your "7 Steps to a Thankful Heart" and packing an Operation Christmas Child box. Sit down with your kids in advance and decide how many shoe boxes you will fill, whether they will be for boys or girls, and the age group. (Suggested: one box per child, matching the gender and age of that child.)

### Step 2 - The 2-for-2 Race



Set a timer for two minutes and race through the house to grab two of your favorite things. Make sure they fit in the car and don't require feeding or a leash!

Proceed to your favorite family restaurant. (Yes, Taco Bell counts!)

### Step 3 - Fire Drill



Every time the car stops, someone must yell out things that he/she is thankful for until the car is moving again. If you get stuck, you can tag someone else. No repeats!

### Step 4 - Chow & Chat



Take your favorite things into the restaurant with you. Over dinner, use them as an inspiration for what to put in the box. Example: "I love my Nintendo DS, so I'm going to put some kind of fun game in my box." (See the Discussion Key for more questions. Make sure younger children understand that they are NOT putting their own favorite toys in the boxes.)

Full and talked out? Head over to a nearby mall, superstore or dollar store.

### Step 5 - Shop 'til You Drop



Divide into teams and race against the clock to find all your shoe box items in 10 minutes or less. Make sure you fill your box to the top!

**BONUS ROUND:** The winner picks where you'll eat dessert! When you're finished, head home for the final steps.

### Step 6 - This Is Me!

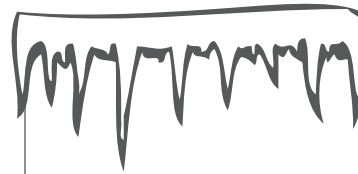


Give each child an "All About Me" coloring sheet, and if needed, help them fill out the information about themselves to include with the gifts in the shoe box. Make sure to include child and/or family photos.

### Step 7 - Pack & Pray



Follow the instructions and pack your box(es). Then take time as a family to pray for the child or children who will receive your gifts.



### DISCUSSION KEY

Parents, you can use these questions with your K-5 kids:

1. What does it mean to have a "thankful attitude"?
2. What if everything you have (toys, TV, clothes) was gone tomorrow? Would you still have anything to be thankful for?
3. On a scale of 1-10, how thankful do you think we are as a family?
4. Why is it important that we're a family that gives to others?
5. How do you think that giving to other people shows God we're thankful to Him?

### PRESCHOOL HELPS

Make sure to include your preschooler in the family fun!

- Slow it down. Don't feel like you have to race, and let them go at their own pace. You might want to buy the gifts one evening and pack and pray the next day.
- Help them relate. Make sure their box is for a child of the same age and gender. That way, they can pick out their favorite toys to include.

### QUESTIONS JUST FOR THEM:

1. What are you thankful for?
2. Do you know who gives us all those things? God! And we should thank Him. You say, "Thank You, God!" and I'll say something we're thankful for. (Like "Thank You, God for puppy dogs!") Great job!



# SHOE BOX PACKING INSTRUCTIONS

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD! YOUR GIFT AND THE MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST WILL IMPACT THE LIFE OF A CHILD WHO MAY NEVER BEFORE HAVE RECEIVED A CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Please follow these guidelines in packing your boxes.

**1. GATHER YOUR MATERIALS:**

- Standard size shoe box (plastic or cardboard)
- Box label listing gender and age group—at the bottom of this sheet (*Note: if you choose to use the "Follow Your Box" option listed in step four, you will be provided with an electronic label to print.*)
- "All About Me" child information and coloring sheet

**2. PURCHASE GIFT ITEMS.** Use the "Operation Christmas Child" Parent Cue to create a family evening in which you purchase the items to go inside the box. We suggest the following:

**Toys**

Small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch A Sketch®, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky®, etc.

**School supplies**

Pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

**Hygiene items**

Toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

**Other**

Hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries)

Please do NOT include:

Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans

**3. ASSEMBLE THE BOX.** You may wrap your gift if you desire, but make sure to wrap the lid separately. Place your gifts inside, along with the "All About Me" coloring sheet. If you choose to make your \$7 donation per box by check (instead of using the online "Follow Your Box" option), please place a check made out to Samaritan's Purse on top. Then put the lid on the box, tape the appropriately marked boy/girl label on top, and place a rubber band around the box.

**4. USE THE "FOLLOW YOUR BOX"**

**DONATION AND TRACKING OPTION.** We encourage you to give your \$7 per box donation online via credit card:

[www.SamaritansPurse.org/index.php/OCC/EZ\\_Give\\_Donations](http://www.SamaritansPurse.org/index.php/OCC/EZ_Give_Donations)

If you do this, you will be able to print out a box label that will allow you to track your box online and discover where it goes!

**5. DROP OFF YOUR BOX.**

Once you've completed your boxes, bring them to your church or the drop-off site your church suggests. And if you've used the "Follow Your Box" system, look for an email telling you where your box has traveled.



The image shows two shoe box labels. The top label is green and for a 'BOY'. It has three checkboxes for age groups: '2-4 Years Old', '5-9 Years Old', and '10-14 Years Old'. To the right of the checkboxes is a simple line drawing of a boy. The word 'BOY' is written in large, bold, white letters. On the far right is the 'Operation Christmas Child Samaritan's Purse' logo, which features a white shoe box with a red ribbon and a red airplane flying above it. The bottom label is red and for a 'Girl'. It has the same three checkboxes for age groups. To the right of the checkboxes is a simple line drawing of a girl. The word 'Girl' is written in large, bold, white letters. On the far right is the same 'Operation Christmas Child Samaritan's Purse' logo.



**Hi! I would like to introduce myself to you.**

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_**

**and I am very glad to meet you.**

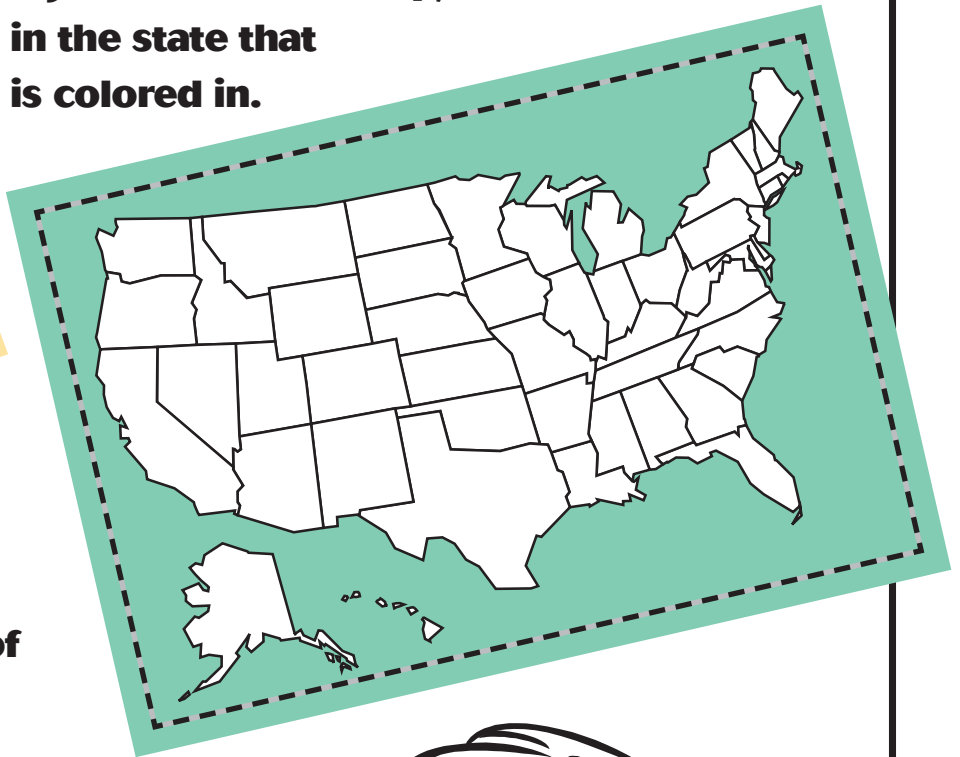
**I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old.**

**This is what I look like.**

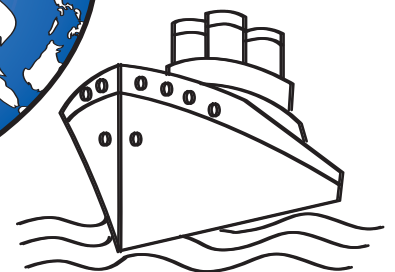
**I live in the United States of America.**

**I live in the state of \_\_\_\_\_,  
in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.**

**If you look at the map, I live  
in the state that  
is colored in.**



**Now if you look at a map of  
our world, I've colored the  
country where I live. My  
shoe box has taken a  
fantastic journey  
to find you!**





**There are lots of things I like.**

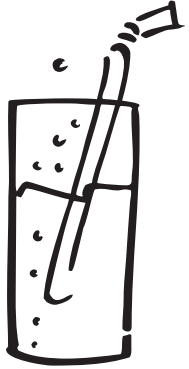
**My Favorite:**

**thing to drink is** \_\_\_\_\_.

**color is** \_\_\_\_\_.

**food is** \_\_\_\_\_.

**thing to play is** \_\_\_\_\_.



**When I have free time,**

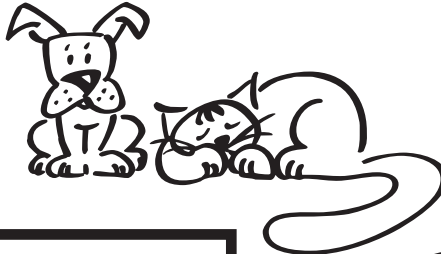
**I like to** \_\_\_\_\_.



**I love Jesus because** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



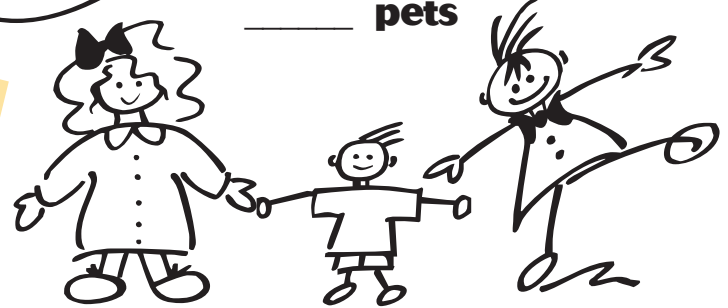
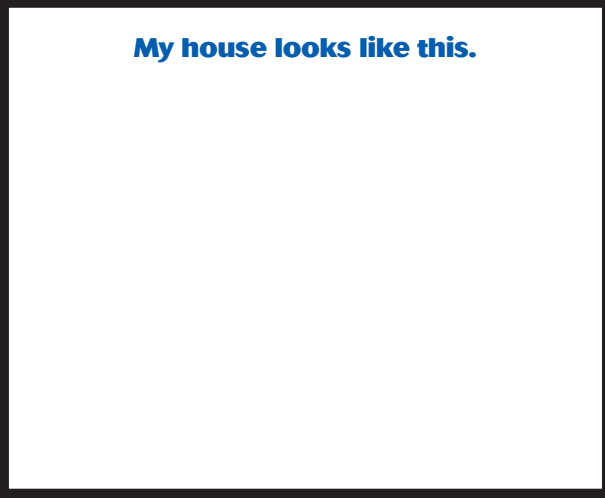
**In my family, I have**

\_\_\_\_\_ **brothers**

\_\_\_\_\_ **sisters**

\_\_\_\_\_ **pets**

**My house looks like this.**



**I hope you like the gifts I packed for you. If you send me a letter to this address, I will write you back and we can become friends.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*color the pictures!*

