

Learn What Your Name Means Day

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Have you ever thought about the meaning of your name? Its origin or history? Maybe you should, because you might be surprised with its meaning.

March 5 is a day designated for this activity called Learn What Your Name Means Day, but of course you can do this on any day! The day was created by American onomatologist Jerry Hill in 1997 with the purpose of encouraging people to celebrate and appreciate their names. It seems he developed an interest in names

at an early age and continued his research on the subject.

There is also a day to recognize your middle name, called Middle Name Pride Day. This is important because we sometimes forget the middle name and tend to hide it.

A name is a word used to identify people, places and things. The first name is referred to as the given name, and the last name is referred to as the surname. This is also known as the family name, and indicated that the person belongs to a specific family. Once a woman gets married, she usually takes the last name of her husband, and her last name becomes her

maiden name.

In many cultures, people are identified by a single name, while others choose to use a name coming from the father's side, which is referred to as paternal. On the other hand, a name could be used from the mother's side of the family, which is called maternal.

Let's check out the meaning of Margaret, the *Mini Standard* editor's name. It is of Greek origin, and means pearl. It's also referred to as a saint's name, with historical backgrounds with nine queens being named Margaret.

Bonnie Bear has Scottish origins, and Bonnie means fine, attractive and pretty!

From the Scottish word "bonnie" and also diminutive of the French word "bonne," meaning good. It is sometimes used as a nickname. On the literary side, Scarlett O'Hara's daughter in "Gone With the Wind" was named Bonnie Blue.

Talk to your parents or family members about your name. Ask them why they gave you your name and what it means. With a little bit of research you may be able to find out about the lives of your ancestors. Visit www.thinkbabynames.com

DID YOU KNOW? The study of the history, origin and meaning of proper names is called onomatology?

Celebrate Letter Writing Month

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National Letter Writing Month is designated for April, but hand-written letters can be sent anytime of the year. The month is just a way to encourage everyone to take time and compose a hand-written note for those who have been kind to you or showed acts of kindness, or to just keep in touch. It might be a birthday card, a thank you note or a letter to someone you want to stay in contact with. A letter is a gift.

Yes, we could send a quick email, text or Facebook message, but that is not nearly as exciting as finding a personal letter addressed to you in your mailbox. Plus, if the receiver chooses to keep the letter, it can last a lifetime. When you write a letter, it lets the receiver they are important to you.

Irving College School third-grader Jaxyn Petrovic received a birthday card and note from a grandmother whom he hadn't seen in a long time.

"I felt so happy when I got the letter," said Petrovic. "It has been a

long time since I saw her, and at least now I have something from her."

His teacher, Betty Clendenon, shared her experiences about writing and receiving letters before the emails and text messages became so popular.

"I appreciate it so much when I receive a letter or a birthday card, because I know that person is thinking about me," said Clendenon. She challenged her students to write a letter or a card to someone in the near future.

It's a proven fact letter writing improves social and penmanship skills, and helps create lasting memories with people you care about. It seems the art of hand writing letters has been cast aside for the more immediate digital communications. Letters take a little more time and thought, and are not filled with clumsy acronyms and cute emojis.

In fact, the U.S. Postal Service celebrates April as National Card and Letter Writing Month by issuing colorful stamps complete with decorative stickers for personalizing envelopes, letters and greeting cards.



Third-grade student Jaxyn Petrovic recently received a letter from his grandmother, and thinks it's a good idea to return the favor. Letter writing is a dying art, mostly attributed to sending messages through the phone or computer. Classmate Jacy Lowry is in the background.