

1. Invite class to talk about a recent youth activity. Have each add some detail no one else has mentioned. Relate to a special family event - a baptism, sealing or mission. One version gives a piece of the story, but your perspective is unique and important. Don't let it be forgotten. Recording events help us remember - these memories create a family legacy.

2. Discuss the different ways to keep a journal—for example, diaries, letters, scrapbooking, picture albums, drawings, and blogging. Ask class members what their favorite method is.

Why is it important to keep a personal record? (Through a personal record, a person can share with her descendants events in her life, her testimony, her thoughts and feelings, and a record of Heavenly Father's blessings to her.)

3. Why did Nephi keep a record of his life as he and his father's family left Jerusalem and traveled to America? (1 Nephi 1:1–3.)

My Journal, My Testimony BY SALLI HOLLENZER :

I began keeping a daily journal when my children were young and the clamor and concerns of parenting filled my days.

This habit began when I found myself wishing I could read my grandmother's journal. She raised six children, and I wondered how she had managed the challenges of motherhood. Unfortunately, such a record does not exist, but I still longed to know how my grandmother ministered to the needs of her family while maintaining her individuality and spiritual strength.

Also pressing on my mind was President Spencer W. Kimball's admonition to "begin today and write ... your goings and your comings, your deeper thoughts, your achievements, and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies. We hope you will do this, ... for this is what the Lord has commanded, and those who keep a personal journal are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives."

I desired these blessings and also wanted to leave a written legacy for my posterity. At that time I committed to the practice of daily journal writing. Since I began in 1981, I have filled 38 journal volumes.

In more than 25 years of journal writing, I have learned far more than I ever imagined about the blessings President Kimball spoke of. Following are some of the things I have gained through journal writing.

I acquired a written family record of details that are a practical source of information.

I have a clearer, richer memory of the past.

I found a practical method of setting goals, tracking my progress, and following through on commitments.

I discovered a therapeutic means to resolve emotional, social, and spiritual issues I face.

I have improved my writing skills.

I have discovered that many of my righteous desires are eventually fulfilled.

I have created a form of personal scripture by recording the inspiration and revelations I have received. s.

For me, journal writing is another way I can beseech the Lord. Often my thoughts are drawn to Him as I write, and I feel enveloped by His love.

•How do you know that Heavenly Father wants you to keep a record of your life? (Since the beginning of time, he has commanded his children to keep personal records of their lives. And modern prophets have encouraged us to keep journals throughout our lives.)

What blessings from the Lord could we record in our journals? How can recording these blessings remind us of the Lord's love for us?

Who else might be blessed when we keep personal records? How?

Elder Don R. Clarke:

I have a little book that I carry with me, where I record the inspiration and thoughts that I receive from the Spirit. It does not look like much, and it becomes worn out and needs to be replaced from time to time. As thoughts come to my mind, I write them down and then I try to do them. I have found that many times, as I have done something on my list, my action was the answer to someone's prayer. There have also been those times that I didn't do something on my list, and I have found out later that there was someone I could have helped, but I didn't. When we receive promptings regarding God's children, if we write down the thoughts and inspiration we receive and then obey it, God's confidence in us increases and we are given more opportunities to be instruments in His hands.

My life isn't very exciting, and I'm not a very good writer. Do I still need to keep a journal?

The experiences you have are unique. Years from now you will be amazed at how much you have grown.

Be honest about yourself. Your journal is the perfect place to sort out your feelings, set goals, and develop dreams.

Write down experiences as soon as you can. Interesting details can fade quickly.

Moroni didn't think he was a great writer either (see Ether 12:23–25), but we'd be missing a lot without his writings.

If nothing else, write your testimony. Nephi said, "We ... write, to persuade our children ... to believe in Christ" (2 Ne. 25:23).

Elder L. Edward Brown of the Seventy said, "There is something about journal writing that causes us to meditate, to recommit, and to receive spiritual impressions in the process of such pondering. Frequently, you will have cause to rejoice at how the Lord has been sensitively involved in guiding and watching over you and those you love and care about" (Ensign, Dec. 2000, 16).

Journal writing is the perfect place to sort out your feelings, solve problems, set goals, preserve memories, and develop dreams. It's important to write about experiences now while your memories are fresh. Years down the road you will rediscover your words and be amazed at how much you've grown and how much the Lord has blessed you.

You may never be remembered for your superior writing skills, profound insight, or miraculous experiences as a teenager, but you're the only one who can describe the night you finished the Book of Mormon for the first time, or the flustered feeling you had on your first date, or the smell of fresh roses at your grandpa's funeral, or anything else in your life. If you're the only one who benefits from your efforts, that's enough.

Play, "Remember. Remember" clip, then challenge:

For three weeks, every night before going to sleep, ponder Elder Henry B. Eyring's question, "Did God send a message that was just for me? Did I see His hand in my life?" (Ensign and Liahona, Nov. 2007, 69). Record these experiences in your journal.