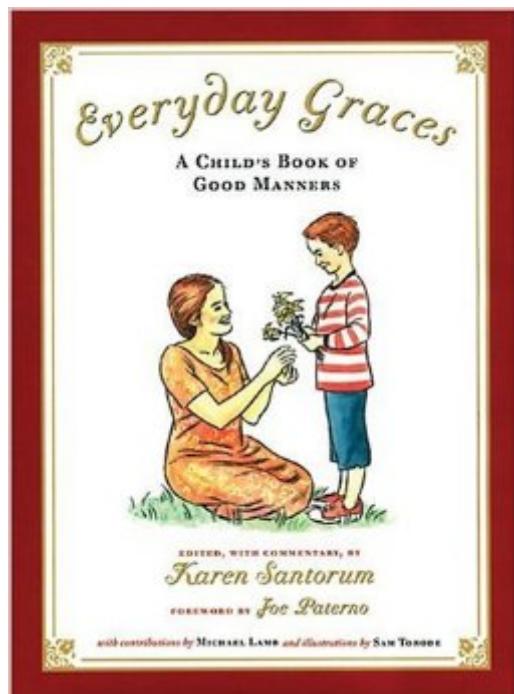


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# Everyday Graces: A Child's Book Of Good Manners



## Synopsis

The regrettable fact is that the subject of manners is not much discussed anymore, and good manners seem practiced even less. But good manners are a prerequisite for the growth of moral character; they are the habits of conduct and behavior by which we express in the most ordinary circumstances our fundamental respect for others, whether parents, friends, colleagues, or strangers. Fortunately, Karen Santorum has produced for parents and teachers a wonderfully rich and instructive anthology to help instill good manners in our children "and stand against a decline of civility and a coarsening of our common life. Under such headings as "œHonor Your Mother and Father," "œPlease and Thank You," "œNo Hurtful Words," "œGood Behavior in Sport," and "œShowing Respect for Country," "Everyday Graces features stories and poems that will develop and enrich the moral imagination. This marvelous anthology features classic selections from such well-known authors as Hans Christian Anderson, Beatrix Potter, Mark Twain, Frances Hodgson Burnett, C. S. Lewis, Max Lucado, and Arnold Lobel, as well as forgotten gems that deserve a new hearing. Mrs. Santorum writes that this anthology grew out of the frustration of not being able to find a book on manners that instructs through stories rather than by rules of dos and don'ts. She and her husband tried and tested many of these selections on their six children. Each of the selections is briefly introduced with a thoughtful commentary at the close, producing an informality and intimacy that is inviting and infectious. Find out why *Everyday Graces* has become a beloved feature in homes, schools, churches, and libraries across America.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 3 and up

Grade Level: Preschool and up

## Customer Reviews

This is a great collection of poems, book excerpts, and stories geared towards leading a child to good morals and desirable habits. My daughter (6 yo) loves reading these stories and poems. The book is divided into sections, each focusing on a different moral trait or good habit, such as honesty, good table manners, and responsibility. Parents and children will find this collection interesting and entertaining. Many excerpts and poems have a humorous bent, which helps to freshen a possibly dry and tedious topic. Excerpts are taken from a wide variety of authors, from L.M. Montgomery (*Anne of Green Gables*), to the whimsical Shel Silverstein. This is a book that is a great resource for good manners and habits.

**PROS:** I bought this book for my 5 year old daughter, and we have been really enjoying it as it is a wonderful collection of literature. Each story comes with a little blurb emphasizing the moral of the story. I read some of the other reviews and a few seem to knock teaching morals through stories. However, I disagree -- so many of us like a good story, and it is a great story that maybe teaches us a little something. A story has been a great way to spark a conversation with my daughter about what happened to a certain character. We can start examining morals and life lessons, and work through how to make good choices.

**CONS:** The only con for this book I have is some of the literature is made for a child a little bit older than my daughter. As I said, she is 5 (almost 6) and she has had a harder time comprehending SOME of the stories written with an older English. However, for every story that she might have difficulty with, there are usually 6-10 other poems or stories where it is not a problem, and she will grow into the rest of the stories.

**CONCLUSION:** I really like this book and believe it was worth the money.

I love the idea of this book- using great literature to illustrate points of good behavior. The author does a great job achieving this. What I found frustrating, though, was that in most cases the reader is given only a chapter, or even just part of a chapter, of a book like Little Women or Anne of Green Gables. If your children are not familiar with these books, you will have to spend some time explaining all that has happened to lead up to the point being presented. Otherwise, if you don't know the whole story, it is very hard to appreciate fully the example given. Also- having only a tiny part of the story frustrated my children. They were upset when the chapter ended and wanted to

hear more of each story. And that is fine, and even good- inspiring us to read the whole book later- but it did make us "lose the moment", so to speak. I think this book would be excellent for older children or teenagers who already are familiar with Anne of Green Gables and her friend Diana Barry, who know their history in Avonlea and can immediately connect with the chapter presented. Or who already have read The Iliad or Hans Brinker. Otherwise- why not just read the whole of Hans Brinker? or Little Women? or any of these books? They are excellent stories, full of many examples of good morals and good manners that could be discussed along the way.

I highly recommend it. It has all kinds of literature in it (poetry, classical lit, bible verses, etc). The first section is about obeying your parents. The author gives examples through literature of children who didn't obey their parents and the consequences. For example, she retells the Greek myth of Icarus and His Father. It's very fun and helps spark conversation about obedience throughout the day with "remember the story...". For those of you who lean on Scripture for instruction to your little ones, it includes it and may be at the heart of this book as well, but the author doesn't wave it in your face on every page.

This book has some wonderful, beautiful gems in it. There were many poems and selections from books that I remember from my own childhood, but also some that I have never heard of. The book is mostly too old for my 2 1/2 year old daughters, but there are a few poems and selections that I can read to them and get their attention with. There aren't many pictures - I can't recall any, but think there might be a few small drawings. This is for children old enough to listen as you read aloud. I am thrilled to have this book on my shelf, where my children can read through and explore it when they get older. I appreciated that there was a mix of styles, from whimsical poems by Shel Silverstein to selections from Anne of Green Gables. One of the greatest things about this book is that it calls one's attention to indispensable classics that parents may have forgotten, or never read before. I will be buying some of the books which selections were chosen from, and referring to this book as my children grow up to get ideas for stocking the family library. I do have a few minor complaints. First, many selections are followed up by a 'moral' written in everyday language. I found this potentially trite and the points were overly belabored. Also, sometimes the switch in tone could be jarring after some of the selections. However, I think that these little notes will have the desired effect as long as I don't read them and just leave them for my children to discover when they are able to read for themselves. I'm hoping that they will come across as little treasures and surprises for my children to discover on their own. Second, some of the selections came from novels and

needed a lot of prefacing to explain their context, and even then seemed a bit disjointed. Most were fine, but occasionally I just felt like something was missing as I read the selection.

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