"I have a surprise for you," Dad said with a smile.

Lindsay's Family Puzzle

By Jill Hacking
Church Magazines
Based on a true story

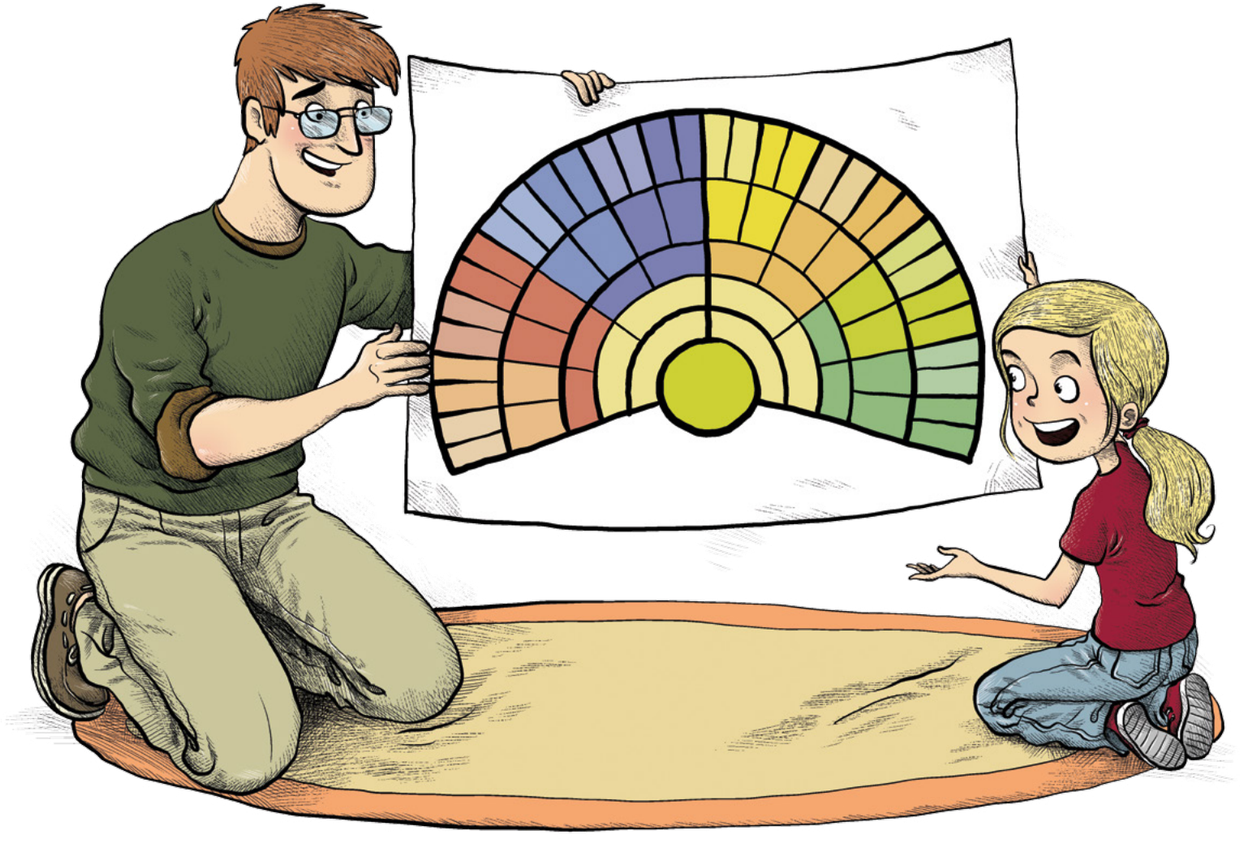
"And we as the children can seek out our loved ones, preserving their names and their memory" (Children's Songbook, *90*).

Lindsay raced downstairs when she heard Dad call her name.

Lately they had been doing a lot of family history work together. Dad would help her log on to the FamilySearch website, and together they'd look for family pictures and stories. Just the other day she'd found a really old document about Grandpa on his mission!

Lindsay reached the bottom of the stairs where Dad was waiting. "Are we doing family history tonight?" she asked.

"Yup, and I have a surprise for you," Dad said with a smile. He handed her a long, rolled-up paper he'd held behind his back. Lindsay carefully unrolled it. She stared at the large fan shape on the page.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY VICTOR RIVAS

There was her name at the bottom! Lots and lots of other names spread out in neat rows around hers.

"That's you and Mom," Lindsay said, pointing to the names closest to hers. "And there's Grandma and Grandpa!"

"That's right," Dad said. "This fan chart shows the names of your ancestors for *nine* generations."

There were so many names. But some of the spots were empty. Lindsay wondered about the missing names. "It looks like the puzzles I used to do with Grandpa," she said. Grandpa had died a few years ago, and Lindsay really missed him.

Dad nodded. "It *is* like a puzzle. A very important puzzle. And every family member is like a puzzle piece."

Lindsay almost laughed when she imagined Grandma shaped like a puzzle piece.

"When we find a person's name and do their temple work, we link them to the rest of the family—like joining puzzle pieces together. *You're* helping build this puzzle."

"Wow." Lindsay brushed her fingers over the names. She knew family history was important, but now she was even more excited to help. *All* of her family could be linked together forever!

Lindsay taped her new chart to the ceiling right above her bunk bed. She loved to stare at the chart and study all the names. She imagined everyone holding each other's hands, linked together like puzzle pieces. She felt happy. This was the biggest puzzle she had ever seen!

One night Lindsay couldn't sleep. Her bedroom was really dark. The tiny night-light made scary-looking shadows on the walls. She pulled her blanket up over her head and squeezed her eyes shut.

After a little while she peeked out above the blanket and saw the chart. She read her name. Then she read Mom and Dad's names. When she got to Grandpa's name, she felt warm and peaceful.

She remembered how Grandpa smiled at her when they did puzzles together. "When I help Dad do family history," she thought, "I'm linking our family together!" She imagined Grandpa smiling even bigger about that. She didn't feel scared at all anymore. She smiled and snuggled into her blanket and fell asleep dreaming of people and puzzles and connecting her family together. ■

LINDSAY'S LIST

Lindsay works on family history in lots of ways!

She made her own family tree on FamilySearch.org. She searches for stories and pictures of her family.

She solves family history mysteries! One time a record was missing. She and her dad went to a family history library. They searched in the files and found a copy. They found names of more family members too!

Her favorite part of doing family history is finding names for temple work. She's excited go to the temple and do baptisms when she turns 12.