

COMPASSION

# explorer®



**Christmas Bonus!**  
Pop-up Nativity inside!



**Best GIFTS EVER!**

# Hola, Explorers!

Say it: OH-la!

("Hola" is Spanish for "Hi!")

As you exchange gifts with family and friends, remember that some gifts – like love and friendship – don't come in packages. That's what this issue is about!

Check it out!

**GIGGLE** pg.3

over some hilarious photo captions.

over there!

**DISCOVER** pg.4

the Dominican Republic and find out why an American boy traveled there.

**Seize** pg.11

a crossword about the best gifts of all.

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a pet out of an egg carton.

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a meal that looks like the Dominican flag.

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for others, like a girl named Ava does.

**GROW** pg.15

in faith with a lesson about gatherings.

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# GIGGLE

Remember this picture from the summer 2017 *Compassion Explorer Magazine*?  
Here are some of your great captions!

**Wait. Which one is the real cat?**

Micah, 11  
Bothell, Wash.

**Let's have a playdate!**

Jeremiah, 11  
Warsaw, Ind.

**These are my "pearly whites."**

Abigail, 9  
Ontario, Canada

**There's a cat stalking my bear! Help! It's photo-bombing my picture! Ahh!**

Abigail, 11  
Fort Worth, Texas

**Do you know the cat is in the picture?**

Cole, 8  
Warsaw, Ind.

**Where's my cat? Let's see ... stuffie, stuffie, stuffie, cat, stuffie, stuffie ... wait, there you are!**

Grace, 10  
Monroe, Wash.

**A typical day in zookeeper training school.**

Ari, 11  
Mesa, Ariz.

**I can't get to school because I'm trapped under these animals.**

Josiah, 7  
Queensland, Australia

**I love my stuffed animals!**

Oh wait ...  
Emma, 9  
Hurst, Texas

**I had to train the dog to sit ... now it's monkey's turn!**

Lucy, 10  
Dayton, Ohio

**The cat is stuffed, too.**

Jackson, 13  
Warsaw, Ind.

**Cat: "I sure wish I could smile."**

Isabella, 10  
Charlotte, N.C.

## Up Next!

This sponsored boy in the Dominican Republic gets silly in class! Some kids in the Dominican Republic can't go to school because their parents can't afford school fees or supplies. Sponsors help pay for school so kids can learn.



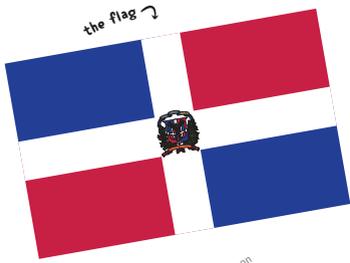
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the flag ↷



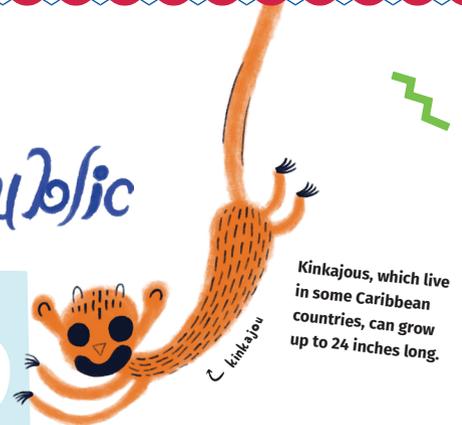
Money: Dominican peso

# DISCOVER

## The Dominican Republic



The distance from Washington, D.C., to Santo Domingo is 1,473 miles or about 3,888,720 kinkajous!



Kinkajous, which live in some Caribbean countries, can grow up to 24 inches long.

© kinkajou



Slightly more than twice the size of New Hampshire.



Shares an island with Haiti.

Christopher Columbus claimed the island in 1492. He named it *Hispaniola*, meaning "Little Spain."

HAITI

Home to one of the largest gold mines in the world.

Home to 5,600 plant species and 303 bird species.



Located in the "hurricane belt," with severe storms from June to October.

Capital city of Santo Domingo is home to almost 3 million people.



Some animals that live here: marine turtles, dolphins, humpback whales, and the endangered rhinoceros iguana.



Main crops: sugarcane, coffee, tobacco.

Has coral reefs, mountains, fertile valleys and tropical rain forests.

### Stats

Dominican Republic

United States

Population	10,606,865	323,995,528
People Living Below Poverty Line	30.5%	15.1%
Languages	Spanish	English, Spanish, Asian, Pacific Island and Indo-European
Religions	Roman Catholic 95% other 5%	Christian 68.2% other 25.2% Jewish 1.9% Mormon 1.6% Muslim 0.9% Jehovah's Witness 0.8% Buddhist 0.7% Hindu 0.7%
Typical Family Income	\$15,900 per year	\$57,300 per year



People don't have enough fresh water that's safe to drink, and many can't afford to buy bottled water.

Mosquitoes infect people with the Zika virus.



Compassion builds water-cleaning centers and helps families pay for clean water.

Compassion shows kids and pregnant women how to avoid bites and helps them get medical help if needed.

DISCOVER  
myWORLD

# IAN and ALEXANDER

These 10-year-old boys live more than 2,400 miles apart, but they have a lot in common! Ian's family in Colorado sponsors Alexander, who lives in a poor part of the Dominican Republic. Let's see what their days are like and find out what happens when the boys meet in person!



# IAN



### My Morning

Ian lives with his 6-year-old sister, Tava, and their parents in Colorado. On school days, he eats breakfast and chooses the clothes he wants to wear. Then he brushes his teeth. He checks his watch to make sure he brushes for two minutes — and to make sure he isn't late for school!

### Mi Mañana

Thousands of miles away in the Dominican Republic, Alexander lives with his brother, Angel, sister, Erica, and their mom. Alexander wakes up in the bed he shares with Angel and Erica. He brushes his teeth at a sink in his backyard, careful not to swallow any water because it contains germs. Alexander's mom doesn't make enough money to meet his needs, so Ian's family sponsors him through Compassion!





### My Trip to School

Ian and Tava's mom teaches them in a classroom at their house. But once a week, they join other home-schooled kids at a school building. On those days, their mom drives them there. It takes about 15 minutes. She drops them off in front of the school.

### My Class

Ian likes learning in his classrooms. His favorite school subjects are science and history. He wants to be a locksmith when he grows up.

# ALEXANDER

### Mi Viaje a la Escuela

After getting dressed in his uniform, Alexander walks to school. His mom can't afford a car, but the walk takes only about 10 minutes. Compassion sponsors help pay for uniforms and school supplies for kids whose parents can't afford them.

### Mi Clase

Alexander's classroom at public school doesn't have air conditioning and can get hot. But the classroom looks a lot like Ian's. Alexander's favorite subject is math, and he wants to be an architect or professional baseball player when he grows up.





### My Meal

Ian and Tava, who packed their own lunch boxes, sit down to eat. Ian is having a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, grapes, cucumbers and water. Students can also buy lunch at the cafeteria. They can choose from a yogurt parfait, milk or apple juice, a salad bar or graham crackers.



### My Hobby

After school, Ian and Tava enjoy riding bikes around their neighborhood. It's a great way to work up an appetite before dinner. They also like playing with their pet turtles, Tommy and Klein, in their grassy backyard.

### Mi Comida

After school, Alexander walks a few minutes to his Compassion center for a nutritious meal, playtime and more learning. Today's meal at the center is mashed potatoes with scrambled eggs on top. The meal is important since some kids in this neighborhood go hungry at night because their families cannot afford enough food.

### Mi Pasatiempo

Alexander's favorite hobby is baseball. Many families in Alexander's neighborhood can't afford toys or sports equipment. So Alexander and his friends use a board as a bat and a plastic bottle filled with rocks as a ball. Baseball is the most popular sport in the Dominican Republic, and these kids really know how to play!



**“I’ve never made a friend that fast. The moment we hugged, we were friends. I could just tell.” – Ian**

### **Our First Meeting** **Nuestra Primera Reunion**

Ian and Alexander have been writing letters to each other for five years. Last summer, Ian and his family went to the Dominican Republic to meet Alexander! After a happy hug, the boys ask each other questions. Alexander speaks only Spanish, but a translator helps them communicate. Alexander is excited to show Ian what his life is like.



### **Our Baseball Game** **Nuestro Juego de Béisbol**

Alexander shows Ian how to play baseball using his homemade ball and bat. It takes Ian a few minutes to get the hang of it. But soon the friends are batting it out of the yard!

### **Our Memories** **Nuestras Memorias**

Ian's and Alexander's families are sad to say goodbye. But they will always have the memories of their special time together. Ian will keep writing letters to Alexander. And he knows Alexander will write him back. This is a friendship that will last no matter how far apart they are.



Watch  
a video   
about Ian and Alexander at  
[compassion.com/explore](http://compassion.com/explore)

# Gifts of Compassion



Ian's family gives Alexander the gift of sponsorship. Unscramble the words below to see the gifts Alexander receives through Compassion's program.

miyeplat



decieinm



upieplss



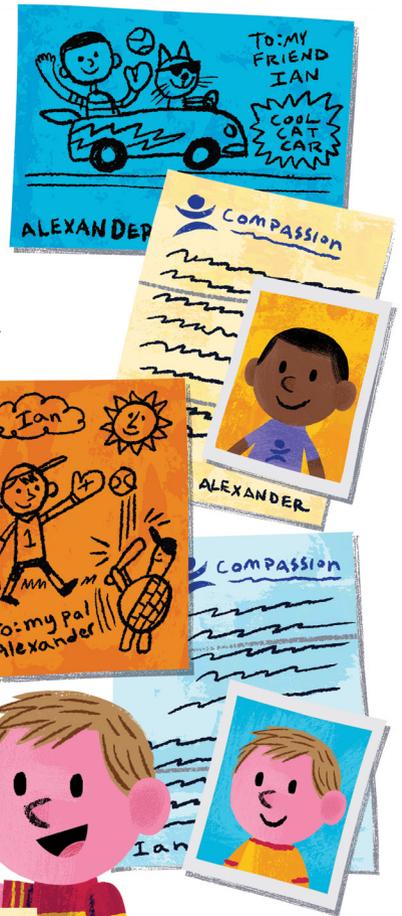
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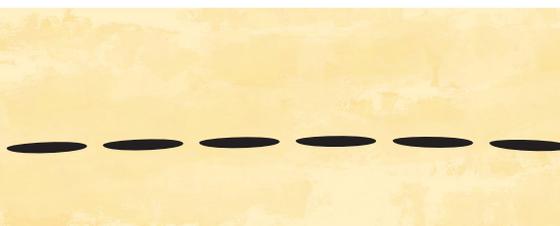
ofod



sonlsse



Fill in the blanks below with the highlighted letter from each word above to figure out the Spanish word for "friends."

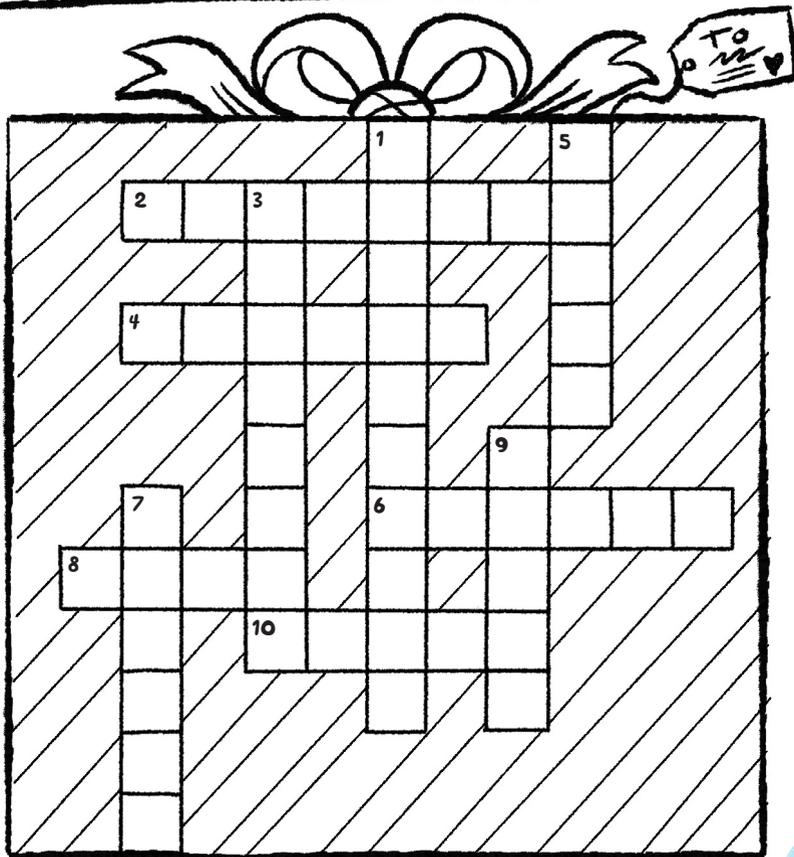


Find answers to the puzzles on the back cover.

# CAN YOU WRAP IT?

Kids who live in poverty often don't get many gifts that can be wrapped in boxes because their parents can't afford them. Compassion gives sponsored kids presents like shoes, toys and food each Christmas. But the sponsored kids receive a better gift every day of the year: the chance to learn about God's love.

Use the clues below to solve this crossword puzzle. The words that go across are gifts you could wrap up in a box. The words that go down are gifts that you couldn't wrap. Which gifts are most important to you?



## Down

- 1 You and your BFF share this special bond.
- 3 Taking photos helps keep these fresh.
- 5 "Sleep in heavenly \_\_\_\_\_."
- 7 You might see more \_\_\_\_\_ members around the holidays.
- 9 "And now these three remain: \_\_\_\_\_, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."  
— 1 Corinthians 13:13

## Across

- 2 Sponsored kids love playing Double Dutch with this (2 words).
- 4 Every toy toolbox needs one.
- 6 Don't go to the rink without these.
- 8 Candy Land is a classic.
- 10 Goes well with pants.



# Craft

During Christmas a lot of people rush to stores to buy toys. But families who live in poverty usually can't afford new toys. So kids figure out how to make them out of recycled materials, like these turtles you can make out of an egg carton.

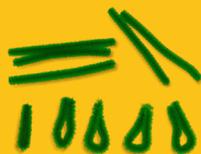
## Shell Swap



**1** Ask an adult to cut out the cups from a cardboard egg carton.



**2** Paint the cups green and wait for them to dry. Then paint on spots.



**3** Cut a pipe cleaner into 5 pieces about 2 inches long. Fold each piece in half to be feet and a tail.



**4** With an adult's help, attach the feet and tail to the turtle shell with a glue gun or stapler.



**5** Glue on a pom-pom ball head and some googly eyes. How cute is that?



Ian and Tava have two pet turtles named Tommy and Klein. They play with them in their backyard! Read Ian's story on page 5.

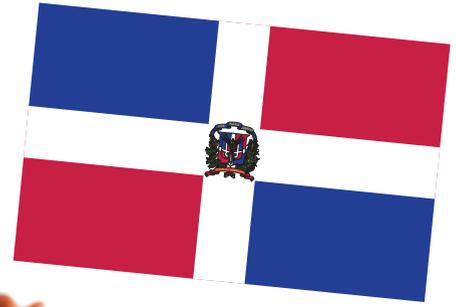


Cantor's giant softshell turtle doesn't have hard tiles, just rubbery skin and ribs to protect its organs!



# The Dominican Flag

This is one of the most popular meals in the Dominican Republic. In Spanish, it's called "la bandera," which means "the flag." It includes rice, beans and meat — either chicken or beef. Each part is supposed to stand for one color of the flag. Many families living in poverty can't afford meat very often because it's more expensive than most vegetables. So this meal would be a special treat!



## Ingredients

1 c. white rice  
2 lbs. chicken  
2 (6-oz.) cans tomato paste  
2 pinches of oregano  
1 bell pepper, chopped

1 large red onion, diced  
4 cloves of garlic, crushed  
1 tsp. fresh cilantro  
salt and pepper, to taste  
2 (16-oz.) cans of pinto beans

## Steps

1. Cook the rice according to package directions.
2. Cut the chicken into small pieces. Mix it in a bowl with 1 can of tomato paste and half each of the oregano, bell pepper, onion, garlic and cilantro. Let marinate at least 30 minutes.
3. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a pot over medium heat. Remove the chicken from the bowl, but keep the marinade. Add the chicken to the pot and sauté until light brown, about 10 minutes.
4. Add the marinade to the pot and simmer, covered, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. Heat 1 tbsp. oil in a large pot over medium heat. Then add the other can of tomato paste and the remaining spices. Cook about 1 minute, stirring. Add the pinto beans to the pot and cook until the beans are warm, about 5 minutes.
6. Serve the beans over rice with chicken on the side. Or for extra fun, arrange the rice in a cross shape and surround it with beans and chicken.

# Care



## Kids Make a Mighty Roar

**T**en-year-old Ava and her classmates at Linfield Christian School in California look forward to Market Day at the end of each quarter. It's when students set up businesses where other students can go shopping.

The students buy goodies like cookies, hot chocolate, artwork and jewelry from other kids. They don't use real money, but toy dollars they call lion paws (the lion is their mascot). Kids earn lion paws for good behavior at school. They save them up for Market Day.

Ava, who used to live in Brazil, a country where many people live in poverty, wanted to do more with her business than earn more lion paws. "Living in

Brazil ... I saw a lot of people who were homeless, and I thought it would be cool if I could help them," she says.

"God made the world perfect, and it was sad to see the people who didn't get a home and couldn't afford a job or a living."



Ava, whose family sponsors children, decided she would use Market Day to help even more sponsored children. She set up a booth and asked for donations — either of lion paws or cash. Her mom and dad had agreed to donate \$1 for every lion paw that Ava collected.

Between cash donations and her parents' matching donations for the lion paws, Ava and other caring people at her school raised more than \$1,000!

"God made everyone, and the people who are living in poverty are just as important as people who are not," Ava says.

**"God treats everyone equally, and it's important that they get the chance to know about God."**

**— Ava**

GROW

the GIFT OF

## GATHERING

All across our country at Thanksgiving, families and friends gather around dinner tables giving thanks for everything God has given them. They eat turkey, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, stuffing, vegetables, and yummy pumpkin pie. They share stories about family, about what has happened to them during the year, and celebrate together for the blessings God has given them.

Jesus did the same thing. He went to wedding dinners to join others who gathered to celebrate marriages. He gathered His disciples to eat and talk and share the love of God. One day He even did a great miracle and fed thousands of people who had gathered to hear Him preach, even though there were just five loaves of bread and two fish to feed the whole crowd.

But God doesn't want us to gather just on holidays. He wants us to gather with other Christians as much as possible because that is how we grow in our faith. That's why going to church, Sunday school, Awana® club, or vacation Bible school is so important. That's where our pastors and teachers walk us through the Bible and show us God's great love. Compassion kids around the world also gather to learn about Jesus.

The Bible tells us that gatherings are when God really shows up. God loves it when we learn and pray together. Jesus said: "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:19-20).

### Matthew 14:13-21

• What gifts did Jesus offer to the 5,000 people gathered to hear Him speak?

• What can you share with others?



**1** Start a family prayer journal. Write down your prayer requests, pray as a family, and then write down God's answers.



**2** If you don't already go to a Bible study, talk to your parents about starting one with some of your friends.

• Thank our heavenly Father for church and getting the chance to know Him better.

• Thank God for hearing your prayers.

• Pray for sponsored kids around the world who gather to learn about God. Pray that they would know Him better each day.



