



# The Mini Page

**Next Week:**  
Summer writing

Issue 18, 2026

Founded by Betty Debnam



## A Berry Happy Mother's Day

photo courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Are you looking for something sweet to do for Mom on Mother's Day? The Mini Page loves the idea of sharing some tasty berries with her on her special day. Along the way, we learned some fascinating facts about these little power-packed fruits.

### Is it really a berry?

Many of the small fruits that we call berries are not true berries. **Botanists**, or scientists who study plants, consider a true berry to be a fruit that develops from a single **ovary**, or female part of a plant.

True berries include huckleberries, gooseberries and some mulberries. The delicious fruits that we often eat are from three different categories:

- **False berries**, such as blueberries and cranberries;



- **Compound fruits**, such as blackberries and boysenberries;



- **Accessory fruits**, such as strawberries.



### Small but mighty

Berries may be small, but they are packed with nutrients. They're a great choice because they're easy to eat, taste juicy and sweet, and are good for us. For example:

- Cranberries help our bodies process food. They may help prevent heart disease, stomach problems and some cancers.
- Blueberries have large amounts of antioxidants, substances that help our bodies

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### Mini Fact:

Berries provide a lot of energy for animals that depend on them, such as bears and foxes.

stay well. They're also high in vitamin C.

- Red raspberries may help our bodies fight cancer cells. They may also reduce pain from arthritis and other diseases.
- Strawberries have a lot of vitamin C and potassium.

### Other uses for berries

Experts say people have used berries in other ways over the centuries. Native Americans used berries to make dyes for clothing and blankets.

They also may have cured infections from arrow wounds with cranberries. Iroquois Indians used blueberries in their ceremonies to bring health in the coming season.

### Berry stories

Along with their importance to our health, berries have legends and **superstitions**, or beliefs, that surround them.

- The name "cranberry" came from

European settlers in America. They thought the cranberry flower looked like the head, neck and bill of a crane.

- Many berries on a holly bush are thought to be a sign of a hard winter coming.



Workers harvest cranberries in fields flooded with water.

photo by Keith Waller, courtesy USDA-ARS

### Cook up something special

How about sharing some berries with Mom and the family for Mother's Day on May 10? Here's a Mini Page recipe you might try.

#### Blueberry Lemon Breakfast Cake

##### You'll need:

- 1 (18.25-ounce) box lemon cake mix
- 1 (6- to 8-ounce) container plain yogurt
- 4 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- Round tube or bundt cake pan
- Cooking spray



Cut out this trophy, color it, and use it to decorate a Mother's Day card for Mom.

##### What to do:

1. Combine cake mix, yogurt and eggs. (Do not add oil and water.)
2. Blend until moist, then beat 2 minutes at medium speed.
3. Fold (gently stir) in blueberries.
4. Spray tube pan with cooking spray. Add cake mixture.
5. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 40 minutes or until done.
6. Cool for 15 minutes before removing from pan. Serves 8 to 12.

### Resources



#### On the Web:

- [kids.kiddle.co/Berry](http://kids.kiddle.co/Berry)

#### At the library:

- "Berry Song" by Michaela Goade
- "A Taste of Blackberries" by Doris Buchanan Smith

### Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of berries are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

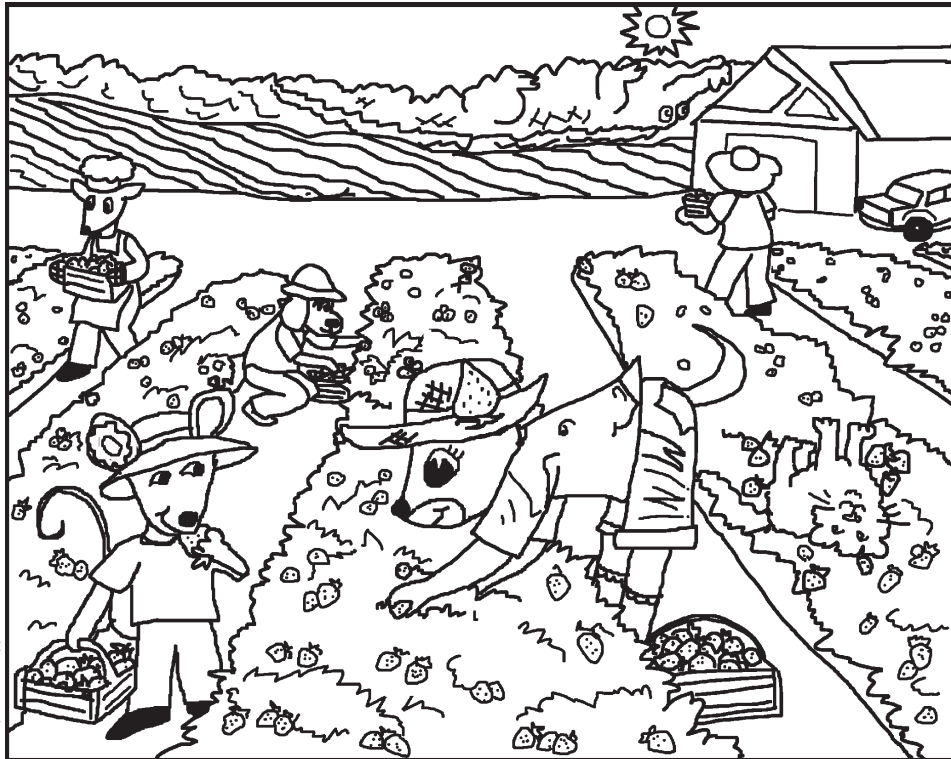


ACCESSORY, BLACKBERRY, BLUEBERRY, BOTANIST, CEREMONY, COMPOUND, CRANBERRY, CRANE, CURE, DYES, FALSE, OVARY, PLANT, POTASSIUM, STRAWBERRY, SUPERSTITION, VITAMIN.

M P N Y D N U O P M O C Z W E  
 U Y Y L B L U E B E R R Y R N  
 I T Y R R E B N A R C U R E A  
 S N I M A T I V O V A R Y P R  
 S E Y D T S I N A T O B J L C  
 A Y N O M E R E C P E S L A F  
 T X M Y R O S S E C C A H N K  
 O B L A C K B E R R Y D W T Z  
 P P C I Y R R E B W A R T S L  
 M N O I T I T S R E P U S N P

### Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are picking strawberries. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



Mini Spy Classics appear in the first issue of each month.

Based on materials originally produced and/or created by Betty Debnam.

- snake
- word MINI
- cat
- pig's face
- doughnut
- strawberry
- alligator
- letter A
- fried egg
- letter A
- number 7

### Mini Jokes



- Ben:** What do you get when two strawberries are introduced?  
**Betty:** A strawberry shake!
- Barry:** What's it called when hundreds of blackberries are stuck in traffic?  
**Brianna:** A blackberry jam!

### Eco Note



Periods of extreme heat that make routine outdoor activities unsafe have doubled worldwide since 1950, according to a new study. Nature Conservancy researchers found that rising temperatures and humidity increasingly push conditions beyond what the human body can safely tolerate, even for light tasks performed in the shade. Older adults are especially vulnerable, with those over 65 now experiencing 900 hours per year on average worldwide when heat severely restricts safe activity, up from roughly 600 hours in the 1950s. About one-third of the global population lives in areas where heat significantly limits daily activity during the hottest periods.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

### For later:

Look in your local newspaper for events and activities related to Mother's Day.

**KidSpot** By Dan Thompson 5-2

What do a flag and a tent have in common? Cross out the letters in their names. Unscramble the five leftover letters to find the answer.

Flag Tent

GNPLELSFTOATE

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