

DAY 5: Five Days of Freebies

Dear Parents,

'Tis the season of giving, so we wanted to share some stories and articles with you from our *Tuttle Times* magazine along with a couple activities and parent articles from our magazine's Plus Pack.

This year, we talked about compromise, political parties, competition, being a changemaker, boredom, collectivism, happiness, strong communities, and more!

Today's freebie is a story about individualism vs. collectivism. It is the core question that affects practically every decision made by our government. Hint: they always choose collectivism.

We hope you enjoy today's content, and you can find the previous four freebies on [our blog](#) or social media.

Strong families are what will change the world. We hope that the dinner table conversation starters empower you and expand your children's knowledge and understanding of how the world works.

—The Tuttle Twins team



If you want your child to enjoy the *Tuttle Times* magazine every single month, be sure to sign up before December 20, so you receive our January issue—all about tariffs.

We have big plans in 2025 for our magazine, so [subscribe today!](#)

Story Overview + Dinner Table Conversation Starters

Story Overview

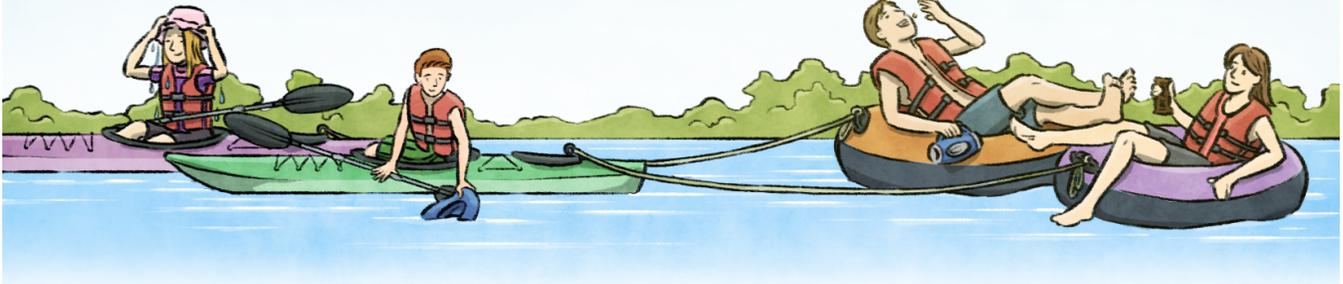
While the twins are kayaking, their parents are being pulled on inner tubes. As they reach the rapids, their parents use the situation to illustrate how giving up individual control by using the inner tubes can lead to difficulties, while taking personal responsibility by using the kayaks might be more work but allows for more freedom.

Ethan and Emily learn that individual choices are important, even if they require more effort. Relying on a collective approach might look like the easier way, but it doesn't always lead to good results.

Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- Are there any situations where you think the needs of a group should be prioritized over the freedom of individuals to choose for themselves?
- Why do you think it's important to take responsibility for your own actions? How can this help you in your daily life?

Kayaks OR COLLECTIVISM?



Ethan wanted so badly to dunk himself overboard into the cool river. The Tuttle family had been kayaking on the Yakipa River for over an hour.

Well... Ethan and Emily were kayaking. Mr. and Mrs. Tuttle were being towed behind in inner tubes, enjoying the sun, eating M&Ms, and listening to the Tom Woods podcast on their waterproof speaker.

“So hot!” Emily moaned, soaking her wide-brimmed hat into the water and then sloshing it on her head.

“After we get through the rapids, we can stop under the bridge to swim, like we always do,” Ethan reminded her. “But until then...” Ethan copied his sister, drenching his head and shoulders under a soggy hat.

For a few minutes, the only sounds heard were the gentle splashing of oars against the water, a few birds, and the voices from the speaker. “When there are problems to be solved, individualism protects a person’s power to choose,” said the show’s guest. “Collectivism demands that those rights are taken away by the government in order to solve it.”

“What’s collectivism? Is that like collecting things?” Emily asked.

“And individualism?” Ethan also wondered out loud. “Why do both words end with ism?”

“Great questions,” Mrs Tuttle said as she paused the podcast. “A collective is all the people in a group, while an individual is a unique person.”

She continued, “Adding the suffix *ism* to the end of a word can mean that it’s the thing you think is most important.”

Ethan thought about it for a second. “I think I get it. Individual-ism means a unique person is the most important. And collectiv-ism means the group is the most important?”

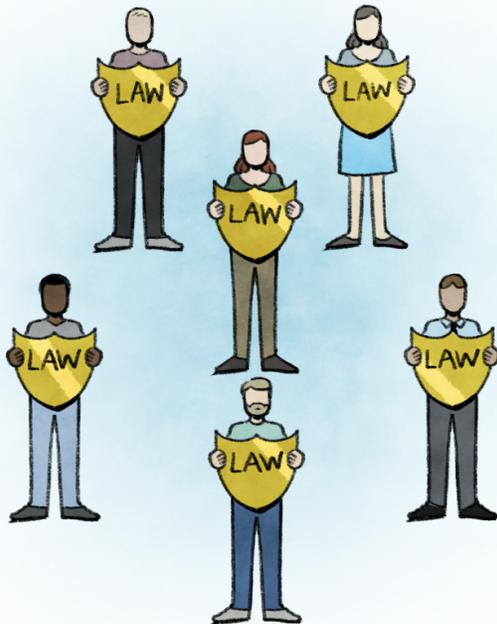
“That’s the basic idea. These opposing ideas are among the biggest political debates in history,” Mr. Tuttle added. “Hey, I have an idea that will help explain. The rapids are coming up. Would you rather take a kayak or an inner tube?”

Emily had been paddling for so long in the heat. The thought of riding the rapids half-submerged in the cool water seemed like a refreshing break. “I’ll take a tube. I won’t have to do anything but let the current take me through.”

“As you wish,” Mrs. Tuttle said, rolling off of her tube and trading spots with Emily. “What about you, Ethan?”

“Count me in,” Ethan said, sliding out of the kayak and trading places with Mr. Tuttle. “No paddling. Just pure relaxation.”

Individualism



When laws defend the individual from the collective.

Collectivism



When laws allow the collective to force the individual.



Mr. Tuttle unhooked the tubes, so all four of them would float independently from one another. The current quickened, and soon the four Tuttles were swooped into the river's roller coaster of rapids.

For Mr. and Mrs. Tuttle, the obstacles were easily avoided. And they were also able to direct their kayaks into the fastest, smoothest paths of the current. "See? Being in control of my own direction is like the freedom of individualism," Mr. Tuttle hollered.

"I can correct my course when I see rocks in my path and paddle into safer, more exciting waters," Mrs. Tuttle said to her children, who were falling behind and spinning out of control. "Yes, individualism takes more work, but it's a lot more rewarding—and fun. Wheeee!"

It turned out that being in the tubes wasn't the relaxing time the twins imagined it would be. "Eeek! Ouch! Owiee!" the twins screamed as their bottoms were continuously bumped by submerged rocks.

Their parents knew how painful getting hit felt, but they still couldn't stop giggling about it. "Bottoms up, kids!" Mr. Tuttle said.



Ethan and Emily arched their backs to keep their bottoms up out of the water. As miserable as the rocks had been, the ending of the ride was even worse. Instead of following the quick flow to deeper water with their parents, the current pulled them into a boggy and buggy marsh.

“Help! We’re stuck!” Emily yelled to her parents, swatting a cloud of gnats away from her face.

“There’s slime touching my toes!” Ethan cried. “Whaaaa!”

“You’re going to have to walk yourself out of there, kids. Sorry,” Mrs. Tuttle yelled back at them. “Giving up your power and personal responsibility to collectivism isn’t so fun, is it?”



After trudging through mud and tall weeds, and swimming through warm, slime-topped water, the twins finally made it to the cool swimming hole in the shade of the bridge.

So, what lessons did you two learn?” Mr. Tuttle asked.

“When there are problems to be solved, don’t give up the power to make individual choices for yourself,” Ethan said, floating peacefully on his back. “Especially to the government.”

Emily added, “And passing your personal responsibility to collectivism actually isn’t the easier path. It’ll just leave you stuck in a swamp with a bruised bottom.”



Mazes

There are two mazes this month. First, take a second to complete the collectivism maze. Not very fun, right? Don't worry, not only is the individualism maze more fun, it also has three choices for where to exit the maze! Which one will you choose?

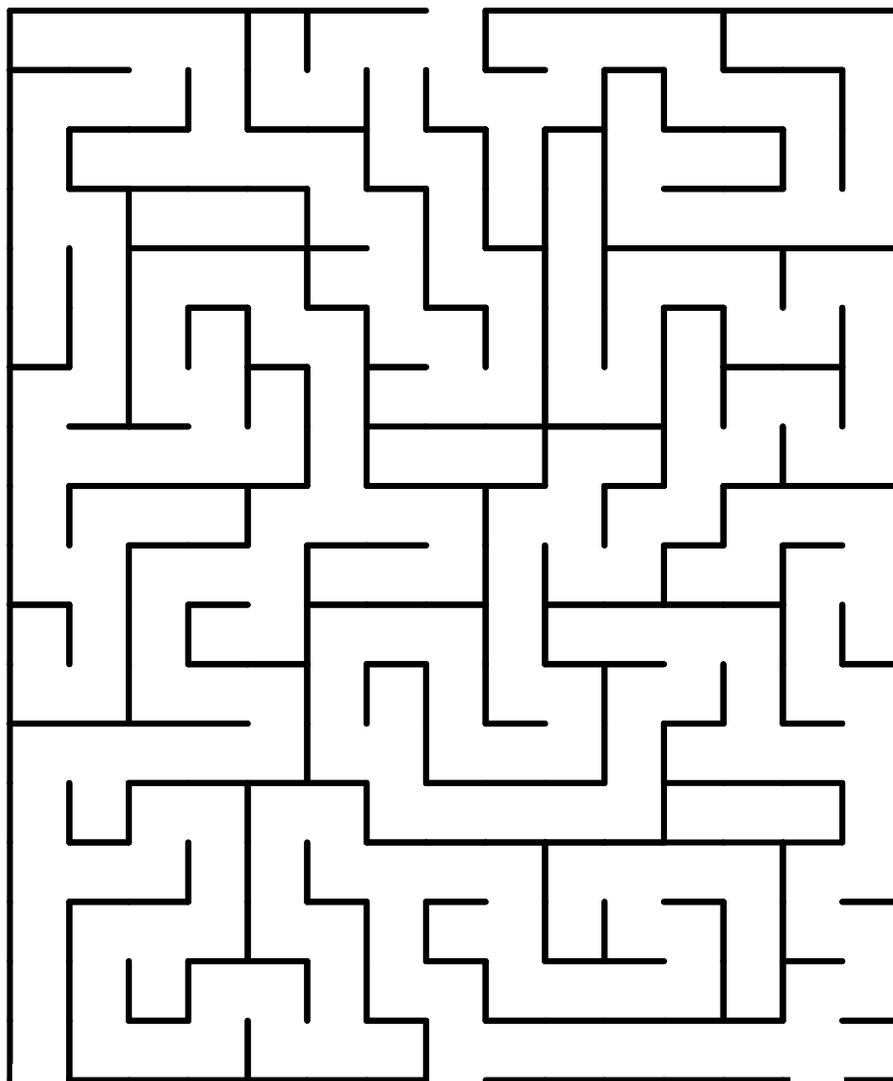
Collectivism Maze

Start



End

Individualism Maze Start



Choice 1

Choice 2

Choice 3

Logic Puzzle: Who? When? Where?

Four friends chose to help their community on four different Saturdays in June. Use the clues to figure out which activity each friend chose and which Saturday they are volunteering.

Solution can be found on the Extra Resources page.

- The four friends are Bryson, the one who chose to clean up the park, the one who chose the 2nd Saturday activity, and the one who chose to volunteer at the animal shelter.
- Gavin loves animals and chose to volunteer at the animal shelter, but not on the 3rd Saturday.
- The friend who chose to play games at the nursing home did not go on the 1st Saturday.
- The friend who volunteered at the food bank went on the 3rd Saturday.
- Fiona was excited to volunteer on the 1st Saturday.
- Bryson is volunteering at the food bank, but not on the 4th Saturday.
- Gavin volunteered the Saturday after Bryson.

		Place				Saturdays			
		Animal Shelter	Food Bank	Nursing Home	Park	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Friends	Amara								
	Bryson								
	Fiona								
	Gavin								
Saturdays	First								
	Second								
	Third								
	Fourth								



For Parents: Learning Through Decision-Making

As parents, our instinct is to guide and protect our children, shielding them from harm and ensuring they make the best choices. However, an equally important aspect of parenting is allowing children to practice making decisions on their own. This skill is crucial for their development and future independence.

There's No Instant Adulthood

Good decision-making skills don't magically manifest when children turn 18—or even when their brain fully develops at 25. Like most skills, decision-making must be learned and practiced over time. You can explain how to make good decisions and even model making good decisions, but that isn't enough. To learn to make good decisions, you need to practice.

Expecting a young adult to make sound decisions without prior experience is unrealistic and can lead to poor choices with significant consequences. Children need a safe environment to practice making decisions, experience outcomes, and learn from their experiences—especially mistakes.

Learning from Bad Decisions

It's natural to want to shield your children from the discomfort and consequences of poor decisions. However, making mistakes is an important part of the learning process. When children make decisions that don't turn out well, they gain valuable insights that help them make better choices in the future. This process helps them develop critical thinking skills and resilience.

That's another reason why it's important to allow children to begin making decisions at a young age. Learning from small mistakes is less risky, and children can learn valuable lessons that they can apply to future decisions when mistakes could have harsher consequences.

If a child decides to spend their allowance on candy instead of saving for a toy they really want, they will likely experience regret and learn the importance of saving. These small lessons accumulate over time, helping them develop a nuanced understanding of cause and effect.

Experiencing Accountability

Accountability is a key component of responsible decision-making. When children understand that their choices have consequences, both positive and negative, they learn to take responsibility for their actions. This sense of accountability helps them mature and understand how to manage their life independently.

Encourage your children to reflect on their decisions and consider what they might do differently next time. Parents can guide the reflection, but it should be an open discussion without judgment. We don't want to make them fearful of making a bad decision. We want them to understand that thinking through decisions can help prevent many mistakes and consequences.

Raising capable, independent decision-makers is a challenging journey, but a rewarding one. By allowing your children the freedom to make choices, face consequences, and learn from their experiences, you're equipping them with essential life skills.

So, embrace the messiness of trial and error, celebrate their courage, and guide them with wisdom and patience. It's exciting to realize that one day, you will be able to step back, trust in their abilities, and watch them flourish.

For Parents: An Argument for Individualism

While individuals are motivated by their own desires and goals, they don't just do things for themselves. They often choose to help others and donate to causes they believe in. Whether it's donating to charity, volunteering time for community projects, or simply helping a neighbor in need, these generous actions make a difference in their community.

When choice is taken away by the force of government, so much is lost in the name of the "greater good." Collectivist ideas, presented as the caring thing to do, are infringements on individual rights. Collectivism is actually when a group's gain comes at the expense of other individuals. Yet people don't blink at the idea of yielding their rights to "help others." They don't seem to realize there is another way. They can keep their rights *and* voluntarily help others.

When decisions that belong to individuals are centralized and implemented through force of government, it creates a cycle of dependency and a culture of entitlement rather than empowerment. This way of thinking enables corruption and causes most of the unnecessary suffering and poverty in the world.

So, Which Ism Is Caring?

Critics often describe individualism as a selfish idea. They think individualists don't care about the well-being of others in society. Collectivism is presented as the kindhearted way to take care of everyone in society. Those are brutal misinterpretations. Individualism is actually caring about each and every individual by realizing they are in charge of their own lives.

The idea of individualism is that each person's rights must be respected. These rights are not granted by any government or authority. Individualism recognizes that each individual is the owner of their life. Individuals should be free to make choices and pursue their own interests.

Collectivism tries to force unity through coercion and central planning. That never works well as people don't like being forced to do things or have what they earned stolen from them. Plus, it's impossible for central planning to take into account what's best for each person. They end up choosing winners and losers—basically who is included in the "greater good."

Individualism recognizes that individuals are free to interact with others as they choose. When individuals are free, it allows for true generosity.

Individualism Drives Prosperity

Individualism champions the principles of personal responsibility, working together voluntarily, and respecting private property. It encourages a culture of self-reliance, where individuals are responsible for their actions and strive for personal growth and success.

By prioritizing individual rights and freedoms, individualism paves the way for prosperity and flourishing. It allows people to be creative, start businesses, and make the world a better place.

Teaching our children about individualism will help guide them in analyzing political, economic, and social issues in the real world. It will empower them to challenge popular narratives and support ideas that respect individual rights for a free society.

Extra Resources

Podcasts

- [What is Voluntaryism?](#) - Episode 124
- [What's So Bad About the Greater Good?](#) - Episode 232
- [Are Communities an Example of Collectivism?](#) - Episode 391

Tuttle Twins Books & eBooks

The overarching theme of most of our Tuttle Twins books is individualism vs. collectivism. But here are a few to reference with this issue:

- *The Tuttle Twins Learn About the Law*
- *The Tuttle Twins and the Road to Surfdom*
- *The Tuttle Twins and the Fate of the Future*
- *The Tuttle Twins and the Mixed Up Market*
- *The Tuttle Twins and the Leviathan Crisis*
- *The Tuttle Twins and the 12 Rules Boot Camp*

Tuttle Twins Cartoons

- [When Laws Give You Lemons](#) - Season 1 - Episode 1
- [Roll for Power](#) - Season 1 - Episode 10
- [The Fight for the Future](#) - Season 1 - Episode 12
- [Cabrini: A Tuttle Twins Adventure](#) - Minisode

Logic Puzzle Answer

- Amara - Nursing Home - Second
- Bryson - Food Bank - Third
- Fiona - Park - First
- Gavin - Animal Shelter - Fourth