

**READING**

**What do you think 'pay it forward' means? How is it different from 'paying someone back'? Read the article and check your ideas.**

The man at the front of the queue for coffee was surprised. 'Why is my coffee free?' 'The woman ahead of you paid for it,' replied the server. So the man paid the bill for the next customer in the queue. And she did the same. Amazingly, people just carried on buying coffee for the customer behind them for three hours, and 288 people.

'There was a great feeling in the coffee shop,' said Maria LaTrobe, one of the servers at the café in Winnipeg, Canada. 'Something like this just makes you feel happy all day.' It seems to be a growing trend in Canada, with more and more stories of strangers paying for others' groceries, parking tickets, train tickets and even meals, and leaving without being thanked.

But the idea isn't a really a new one. It's often called 'paying it forward', which means that instead of paying someone back for their loan or favour, you pay it forward to someone else, creating a chain of generosity. One famous example from the past was the famous American, Benjamin Franklin, who in 1784 lent money to a man on the condition that he helped another person at some point in the future.

Of course, it doesn't have to be about money. Any act of kindness, such as helping someone carry something heavy, or picking something up for them can make both you and the person you helped feel good. And when this happens to you, pay it forward!

**Discuss the following questions in pairs or small groups.**

- A What examples are there in the text of someone 'paying it forward'?
- B What do you think makes people want to do this?
- C What effect do you think it might have on the person receiving the favour?
- D What examples of small kindnesses from strangers can you think of which have happened to you?

