

say it — now

The Documentary

Teacher Resource

Lesson: The Say It Now Documentary

Purpose:

- This guide accompanies The Say It Now Documentary, which explores the journey that inspired the global movement. The film invites viewers to consider who they might thank if they didn't wait, and how expressing gratitude can be vulnerable, meaningful, and deeply human.

Objective:

- Students understand why expressing gratitude matters for both the giver and the receiver.
- Students reflect on the people who have influenced their lives, often quietly or over time.
- Students practice crafting clear, sincere expressions of appreciation in the present moment.

Themes:



Gratitude



Relationships



Reflection



Empathy



Courage

Implementation Tips:

- **Adapt lesson pacing:** This can be a single block lesson or spread over 2–3 days.
- **Model vulnerability:** Share a personal gratitude story of your own to encourage openness.
- **Celebrate actions:** Create a classroom “Gratitude Wall” (either physically in your class or digitally on a virtual whiteboard) where students can post notes about people they’ve expressed gratitude to.

Materials:

[Access to The Say It Now Documentary](#)

Student notebooks or printed worksheets (provided below)

Pens/pencils

Chart paper or whiteboard

Estimated Time:

2-3 lessons (can be shortened)

Note: The documentary is 45 minutes long.



Brain Bite

What’s good for the body is good for the brain. What’s good for the brain is good for the body!

Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important for students to understand the importance of the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

Part I. Before You Watch

(20 minutes)

Purpose:

Activate personal knowledge, build personal connection, set a purpose for viewing.

Step 1:

Say:

"Think about a time when someone thanked you in a way that felt real—not rushed or automatic. What did it feel like to be appreciated?"

- Give students 2 minutes to jot notes.
- Invite volunteers to share words or phrases (not full stories).
- Write down common feelings on the board(e.g., seen, proud, surprised, motivated).

Step 2:

Say:

"Many people shape our lives in small, steady ways that don't always get noticed. Think of someone whose presence, support, or example has mattered to you—even if they never did one big dramatic thing."

- Students should write a few words or complete the optional worksheet below to think of who has made an impact in their lives.
- Emphasize that this can be anyone: a peer, adult, family member, or someone from the past.

Step 3:

Say:

"In this film, gratitude isn't just a feeling—it's a decision to speak, to notice, and to connect."

Pose one or two prompts (students may write or think silently):

- What does it mean to choose gratitude instead of just feeling it?
- How might expressing gratitude change a moment, even briefly?



Brain Bite

Expressing appreciation releases oxytocin—a brain chemical that strengthens feelings of trust and connection.

Part 2. During Viewing

(45 minutes)

Purpose:

Focus attention, help students notice important moments, make personal connections to the message of the documentary.

Notice and Note Prompts:

While we watch, remind students to pay attention to:

- What do you think the filmmaker wants the audience to think or do?
- How does the documentary make you feel?
- How do moments in the documentary help the audience connect with the film's message?

Teacher Instructions:

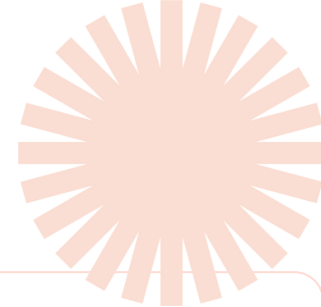
Play the documentary as a class.

- Watch straight through to preserve emotional flow
- Pause once or twice to reinforce noticing specificity and impact



Brain Bite

Gratitude is associated with decreased activation in the amygdala, the brain's threat-detection center, which helps lower fear, anxiety, and stress responses.



Part 3. After Viewing

(60 minutes)

Purpose:

Reflect on the documentary's message and connect it to students' own lives.

Discussion Questions:

Teacher to choose 3-5 to focus on:

- Why do people often wait until someone has passed away to share how they feel?
- What moment from the documentary stood out to you the most? Why?
- How might expressing gratitude "in the moment" change both the giver and the receiver?
- What principles of Say It Now can you incorporate into your own life?
- Did the documentary change how you think about gratitude and appreciation? How?

Activity 1:

What Gratitude Changes (20 minutes)

Students explore how gratitude can shift emotions, understanding, or relationships by reflecting on what comes before and after appreciation is expressed.

Say:

Think of a time you expressed gratitude to someone in your life. What did it change in your relationship? What emotions did it bring up?

✿ Optional worksheet included below ✿

Activity 2:

Gratitude Journaling (10-15 minutes)

Students engage in a quiet journaling activity where they reflect on gratitude through several sentences that explore a specific moment, action, or influence.

Say:

"This is a journaling moment, not something to share or perfect. You're going to write a few honest sentences about gratitude—focusing on one person, moment, or action that mattered to you. Let yourself write freely and clearly, without worrying about how it sounds. For each prompt, only write one sentence."

✿ Optional worksheet included below ✿

Activity 3:

The Gratitude Playlist (20-30 minutes or Homework)

Students imagine their own life as a documentary and create a short gratitude playlist that reflects specific moments when people made a meaningful difference in their lives.

Say:

If your life were a documentary, it would have a soundtrack. Today, you're going to create a short playlist that represents gratitude—the moments when someone showed up for you, influenced you, or helped shape who you are. Choose songs that match the feeling of those moments, not just the lyrics.

✿ Optional worksheet included below ✿

The Impact I Noticed

Many people shape our lives in small, steady ways that don't always get noticed. This reflection invites you to pause and recognize someone whose presence, support, or example has mattered to you—even if they never did one big dramatic thing.

Think of one person who fits this description. This could be someone from your past or present.

Your Reflection

Write about the person you're thinking of and what they've offered you over time.

- What did this person do, say, or model that mattered to you?
- In what ways did their presence make a difference?
- What do you appreciate about them now?

Looking Back

When you think about this person now, what stands out most?

What might they never realize about the role they played in your life?

What Gratitude Changes

Gratitude doesn't always change everything—but it often changes something. This activity helps you notice what shifts when appreciation is present.

Think about a time where you were able to share your appreciation with someone who has made a difference in your life, what changed after that moment?

Emotion	Before Gratitude	After Gratitude
How things felt		
What was unspoken		
Your connection/ relationship		

Gratitude in a Few Sentences

Write a one-sentence journal entry for each of the following prompts, thinking about one person, moment, or action you feel grateful for.

This writing is for you. Focus on being real rather than polished.

What did this person do that mattered to you?

Why did this moment or action make a difference?

What is one quality or habit of theirs that stayed with you?

When you think about this person now, what do you appreciate or notice most?

Gratitude Playlist

If your life were a documentary, it would have a soundtrack. This activity helps you reflect on moments of gratitude in your life by imagining the music that would play during those moments.
Create a short playlist of 3–5 songs that represent gratitude in your life.

Song 1:

What moment or person does this song connect to?

What feeling does this song represent?

Why does this song fit that gratitude moment?

Song 2:

What moment or person does this song connect to?

What feeling does this song represent?

Why does this song fit that gratitude moment?

Song 3:

What moment or person does this song connect to?

What feeling does this song represent?

Why does this song fit that gratitude moment?

Song 4:

What moment or person does this song connect to?

What feeling does this song represent?

Why does this song fit that gratitude moment?

Song 5:

What moment or person does this song connect to?

What feeling does this song represent?

Why does this song fit that gratitude moment?