

**say it
— now**

**We Have
Gratitude**

Middle School

Lesson 1: We Have Gratitude

Purpose:

- The purpose of this lesson is to engage students in the science and practice of gratitude.

Objectives:

- Students investigate and learn about how gratitude impacts well-being.
- Students consider how gratitude impacts their mental well-being.
- Students begin a practice of gratitude.

Skills:



CRITICAL
THINKING



REFLECTION
SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS
SKILLS



COMMUNICATION
SKILLS

Materials:

Chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard; Gratitude Journal, dictionaries or computers (optional)

Estimated Time:

40 minutes



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 Introduction

(10-15 minutes)

Step 1: Mindful Start and Setting an Intention

Objective: To prepare students for learning; to review lessons on mindful breathing and setting intentions.

Invite students to take a short mindful break.

- Now, we're going to try a very short exercise that will help us to be mindful.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Now, just begin by noticing any sounds that are here in this room now.
- No need to do anything but notice what you hear.
- Now, see if you can turn your attention to your breath. Notice that you're breathing now.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.
- Next, we're going to try taking slow breaths in and out...
- Now, take a slow breath in...
- And then, slowly, let your breath out through your mouth.
- At your own pace, take two more deep breaths in through your nose, and slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- Before we start our lesson today, perhaps set an intention... maybe to be curious or open to learning something new. Choose an intention that best speaks to the attitude or outlook you'd like to have today.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

Step 2: Experiential Learning

Overview: Invite students to consider something they are thankful for in their lives.

Note: This activity introduces the concept of gratitude experientially, and anchors them to a personal touch point as the lesson moves to learning about gratitude. Use the following guiding comments to lead the activity.

- Today, we're going to begin by taking a moment to think about something that we're thankful for.
 - On your own, take out a piece of paper and write down, or draw, one thing that you're thankful for.
 - Try to focus on people—those who have helped you or done something thoughtful.
- OR
- You can write or draw something you're thankful for in nature... maybe snow, a favorite tree or flower.
 - Take a few moments to write or draw your thankful thing.

Step 3: Introduce the Topic—What Is Gratitude?

Overview: Using the following guiding questions, lead the class in a discussion about the concept of gratitude. Invite student ideas and write them on the board.

Note: These questions help students access their previous knowledge about the subject.

We just practiced something called gratitude. Provide the following definition:

The Oxford Dictionary describes gratitude as: The quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Now, write the definition on the board.

Next, as a class, come up with a definition that resonates with students.

- How might we define “gratitude” for ourselves?
 - For example: Feeling thankful for someone or something.

Optional: Think-Pair-Share

- With a partner, share what you already know about gratitude.
 - What does gratitude look like in you?
 - How do you think gratitude is related to well-being?
 - Where have you heard about gratitude?

Step 4: Share Out

As a group, invite students to share out their thoughts about gratitude. Write their ideas on the board.

Optional

Movie Scenario

In this scene from the movie Wizard of Oz, Dorothy is saying goodbye to her friends who helped her find her way to the fairy godmother so that she can go home. Dorothy’s friends are from the magical land of Oz and as she leaves she gives them something to keep forever.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following video for students: [Wizard of Oz](#) (this video is from the movie The Wizard of Oz and is appropriate for ages 6+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. *What does Dorothy say to the tinman, lion and scarecrow? How is Dorothy’s words an expression of gratitude?*
2. *Why is being thankful so powerful for the person who expresses it and for those who receive it?*
3. *Why should we often express gratitude to others?*

Optional

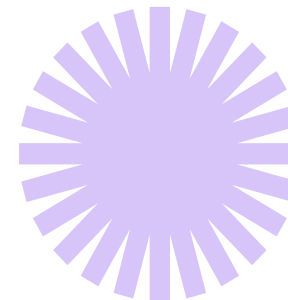
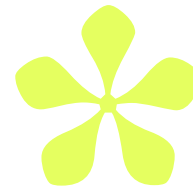
Movie Scenario

In this scene from the movie Frozen 2, Anna is spending time with Olaf. He asks Anna to share her wisdom on a question he has been thinking of. Anna explains her thoughts and there is a combined sing-along among Anna, Elsa, Kristoff and Olaf.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following video for students: [Frozen 2](#) (this video is from the movie Frozen 2 and is appropriate for ages 6+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. *Why do we feel sad when we think about “things” not being permanent? Why is this such a natural feeling?*
2. *What does Anna say to Olaf about how she views her life that allows her to not worry about changes?*
3. *What are the benefits of change and how is it helpful?*
4. *As the characters sang their song, what were they individually grateful for?*
5. *How does gratitude put us and our life in perspective that allows us to overcome change and challenges?*



Part 2 Investigate and Learn

(15 minutes)

Step 1: Sparking Gratitude

Choose one of the following options:

Option 1: Gratitude story is more suitable for younger students.

Option 2: Gratitude video may be more suitable for older students.

Option 1: Gratitude Story

Select a story from the book list to read aloud to the class OR watch the “My Gratitude Jar” narrative story (this video story is great for younger students).

My Gratitude Jar, Kristin Wiens:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TYyJh5Cwvw (in this video, we learn the value of gratitude and its practices through a read aloud story, K-5)

Before you read/watch the story, offer the following instruction:

- As you listen to the story, be a gratitude detective and notice where you see examples of gratitude.
- Following the story, we will discuss what you noticed.

After reading/watching the story, engage students in a short discussion.

- Did you notice any examples of gratitude?
 - Was there a part in the story where you thought one of the characters might have been feeling gratitude?

Option 2: Gratitude Video

Select one of the following video options to share with your class. The intention is to spark interest and curiosity about gratitude.

The Amazing Effects of Gratitude, TED-Ed:

<https://ed.ted.com/featured/Yrv8lnzX> (in this video, we dive deep into what gratitude is and the scientific research showing the value of gratitude, G5+)

The Science of Gratitude, Tremendousness:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMd1CcGZYwU> (in this video, we explore scientific research showing the benefits of gratitude and strategies for practicing it, G5+)

Step 2: The Science of Gratitude

Review the following scientific findings with the class. Write them up on the board: Scientists have been investigating how gratitude improves well-being. Studies on gratitude have shown that gratitude can help us to:

- Feel happier
- Sleep better
- Feel more connected to people and our community
- Feel better when we're sad
- Be kinder and help others
- Have healthier bodies (immune system)

*For more on the science of gratitude, visit <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/gratitude>

Step 3: Discussion About Gratitude Science

Take a few moments for a class discussion. Use the following guiding questions:

- Are there any research findings that surprised you?
- Thinking back to our opening gratitude activity, do you see any links between your experience and the science of gratitude?
- Do you think it is worthwhile to practice gratitude? Why or why not?

Part 3 Finding Gratitude

Step 1: Action Plan

Objective: Students will make personal plans to practice gratitude for the next several days and then reflect on the effect of the practice.

Invite students to practice gratitude for the next several days. Students can write their “gratitude” in their Gratitude Journals.

OR

Students may create their own gratitude jar (see My Gratitude Jar by Kristin Wiens) for their “Finding Gratitude” activity.

- Now we’re going to make a plan to add some gratitude to our lives.
- One way is to be a gratitude detective.
- To do this, you need to be a detective in your own life.
- What does a detective do?
- Invite student ideas.
- Detectives look for clues and evidence.
- You’re going to do the same!
- Be a gratitude detective for the next few days...

- Write down what you discover.
 - Hints: You can look for gratitude in the actions of those around you, in nature or in noticing something that you feel thankful for. You can also feel gratitude for things that went well in your day.
- Each day, write down one or two things that you are grateful for (in your Gratitude Journal or in your Gratitude Jar).
- In a few days’ time, we will come back together to share what we’ve discovered!

Step 2: Reflection and Closing

Invite students to write one or two things that were new for them today. Any surprises?

Next, invite students to write down some ideas about where they can look for gratitude over next few days.



Brain Bite

Exercise stimulates blood vessels in the body and increases blood flow to the brain. It appears to slow or reverse the brain’s physical decay and jump-starts neurogenesis, the creation of new brain cells.

Optional Activity: Gratitude Trivia

Objective: This is a simple trivia game to engage students in critical thinking about the science of gratitude. It will require them to recall any previous knowledge, and apply critical thinking in order to select the correct answer! After the game, review the correct answers to assist students' acquisition of knowledge about gratitude and well-being.

Suggestion: To make this more interactive, use Kahoot to create an online trivia game. <https://kahoot.com/>

Offer the following instructions to students:

- We are going to play a trivia game.
- Here are the ground rules:
- First, we're going to have fun!
- This is not a competition.
- Many of the questions may be new to you. I want you to think critically about what you already know about gratitude in order to help you in answering the question.
- This is a simple True or False game.
- If you think the answer to the question is TRUE, stand up.
- If you think the answer to the question is FALSE, sit down.
- Are you ready? (Check for student understanding.)
- Let's play!

1. Gratitude can make you feel happier. True* or False?
2. Gratitude takes a lot of time to practice. True or False*?
3. Gratitude can help you sleep better. True* or False?
4. Practicing gratitude helps your body heal when you're sick. True* or False?
5. Focusing on things we own, like toys, makes us happier. True or False*?
6. Gratitude can help you feel closer to people in your life. True* or False?
7. Gratitude can help prevent you from getting sick. True* or False?
8. Gratitude can help when you're feeling sad. True* or False?
9. Gratitude can help people become more helpful to others. True* or False?
10. Gratitude can help you feel more connected to your community. True* or False?
11. Expressing thanks to others can boost your happiness. True* or False?
12. Gratitude can change your brain. True* or False?

*Indicates the correct response



Brain Bite

Take it from Robert Emmons, a leading scientific expert on gratitude. By studying more than 1,000 people, ages 8 to 80, he and researchers linked the benefits of gratitude practice to stronger immune systems, higher levels of positive emotions, better sleep and more “get-up-and-go.”

Teaching to Diversity

Optional: Use the following ideas to help you to calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

Differentiation

- Provide book and video lists in advance (weekend before) to give students an opportunity familiarize themselves with the material.
- Factor in more time to read/watch the material an extra time or two.
- Provide a copy of written definitions for students to reference during reflection/ planning tasks.
- Instead of having students write down their ideas, have them discuss with a partner.
- Simplify trivia game questions to simplify the comparisons, e.g.:
 - Gratitude can control the weather. True or False?
 - Gratitude can give you X-ray vision. True or False?
 - Gratitude can give you the power to fly. True or False?

Challengers

- Ask students to look up a definition for gratitude online or in the dictionary.
- Online research: In pairs, students can research the science of gratitude online.
- Review key search words:
 - gratitude, research, science, well-being, happiness.
- You can invite them to visit the following resource, where they will find a lot of useful information about the science of gratitude.
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_changes_you_and_your_brain

Cherish others' kindness at heart and pay back the favor.

Chinese proverb

I believe in prayer. I believe in gratitude and serving people.

Kiran Bedi

One cannot show gratitude for blessings in a better way than using them to benefit others.

Imam Ali

Gratitude Book List

Last Stop on Market Street, Matt de la Pena (this picture book supports gratitude for ages 3-5)

Access read aloud video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zK6CWvW_5-s

The Thankful Book, Todd Parr (this picture book supports gratitude for ages 3-6)

Access read aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVz4-uFhJs4>

Thank You, Omu, Oge Mora (this picture book supports gratitude and altruism for ages 4-8)

Access read aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S628jnrp8JU>

I Am Malala (Young Reader's Edition), Malala Yousafzai (this chapter book also supports altruism, resilience and compassion/empathy for ages 10+)

Access read aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwvURt32DxE>

Crenshaw, Katherine Applegate (this chapter book also supports resilience and empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmYB-TZvxxg>

Wonder, R.J. Palacio (this chapter book also supports empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

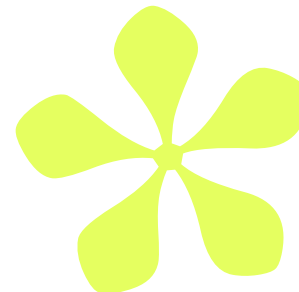
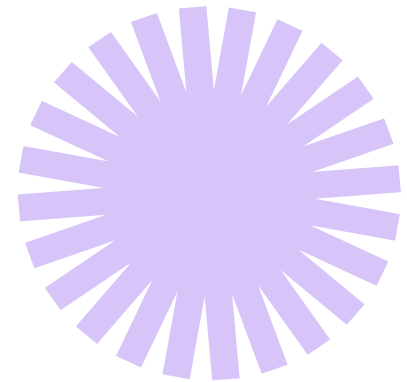
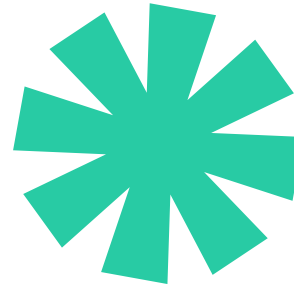
Access read aloud video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1SxNjkhmo0&list=PLGqIrrPkMxTUsiKnK9f1DFAEtwwylDm_C

Refugee, Alan Gratz (this chapter book also supports well-being and resilience for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAA1jEv08h4&list=PLJTEOd7jLQjAQYj_w-cDVPxbc3Un79Is

Rain Reign, Ann M. Martin (this chapter book also supports empathy and compassion for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1DS02s9NC7g>



Lesson 2: We Express Our Gratitude

Purpose:

- The purpose of this lesson is to engage students in a student-directed action to express gratitude to a member of the school community.

Objectives:

- Students reflect on how their recent experience with the practice of gratitude impacted their well-being.
- Together, students consider individuals or groups in their school community for whom they are grateful.
- Students make a plan and take action to express gratitude to a school community member.

Materials:

Dictionaries or computers; chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard; Gratitude Journal

Estimated Time:

Multi-part lesson; 40 minutes plus time for Part 3: Take Action.

Note: This is a multi-part lesson and time will vary for Part 3: Take Action; this lesson may take place over several days.

Skills:



CRITICAL
THINKING



REFLECTION
SKILLS



CREATIVE
THINKING



SELF-AWARENESS
SKILLS



COMMUNICATION
SKILLS



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 Reflect and Connect

(10-15 minutes)

Step 1: Mindful Start (Optional; 5 minutes)

Objective: To prepare students for learning; to review lessons on mindful breathing.

Invite students to take a short mindful break.

- Let's begin by taking a short mindful moment.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Now, begin by noticing how your body feels sitting here.
- No need to do anything but notice what you feel.
- Maybe you notice your feet on the ground or the chair supporting you as you sit here.
- Now, see if you can turn your attention to your breath. Notice that you're breathing now.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.
- At your own pace take three deep breaths in through your nose, and slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- Before we start our lesson today, perhaps set an intention... maybe to be curious or open to learning something new. Choose an intention that best speaks to the attitude you'd like to have today.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

Step 2: Review Gratitude Practice (10 minutes)

Objective: Invite students to share their experience with their personal gratitude practice. Use the following guiding questions to facilitate a discussion.

- What did you notice with your gratitude detective work?
- Was it difficult to find things you felt gratitude for?
- Was it easy to find things?
- It is normal to have different experiences, and some days it may be harder to find things we feel grateful for. On those days, sometimes it is helpful to look back on things that brought you gratitude on previous days.

Note: Normalize for students that finding gratitude can feel more difficult when we are having a hard time (e.g., tired, sad, frustrated, etc.). When that happens, it can help to look back on past experiences of gratitude.

- What did you notice about your mood or how you felt?
- How else might we bring more gratitude into our daily lives?
- Invite student ideas and write them on the board.
- Any other things to share?

Part 2 Plan

(35 minutes)

Step 1: A Gratitude Experiment (Optional)

Spark students' interest in expressing gratitude by playing the short video below.

An Experiment in Gratitude, Soul Pancake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHv6vTKD6lg> (in this video, we learn about scientific research on gratitude and watch its impact through a social experiment, G5+)

Caution: an inappropriate word is censored at 5:27 of this video

Step 2: We Are Grateful to Others

Overview: As a class, invite students to consider those in their school community to whom they feel gratitude.

Note: This activity moves students from thinking about their internal experience of gratitude toward their expression of gratitude to others.

Use the following guiding comments to lead the activity.

- Today, we're going to think about people in our school community who we feel grateful to or for.
- First, you will think about an individual or group of people, and then we will brainstorm as a class.
- On your own, take out a piece of paper and write down someone or a group of people from our school community for whom you are thankful (for example, office staff, lunch monitors, teachers, administration, buddy students, etc.).
- Think about those who have helped you, or done something thoughtful...
- Maybe they make you smile, cheer you up or help you feel welcome.
- Take a few moments to write it down.

After students have written down their ideas, brainstorm with the class.

- Now, let's hear who we feel grateful for!

Invite students to share (popcorn style) and write their suggested community members on the board.

Next, prepare students for their activity: Expressing Gratitude.

- Now, as a class, we are going to choose at least one of these individuals or groups of people to express our gratitude to.
- We will work together to make a plan and take action to show our gratitude and give thanks!

Step 3: Action Plan

Objective: Together, students will make plans to express gratitude to a community member. This activity provides students with an opportunity to express gratitude, and also serves as a community-building opportunity by having students work together to plan and take action in an expression of gratitude. This can be done in small groups, depending upon the separation of tasks.

Note: This is a good opportunity for students to practice the social-emotional skill of perspective-taking, by having students think critically to consider what the community member might appreciate (e.g., staff might like coffee).

Facilitate a brainstorming and planning session.

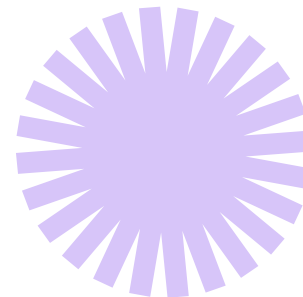
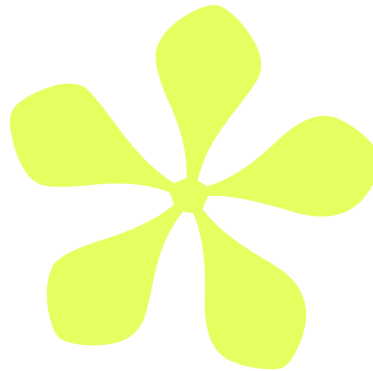
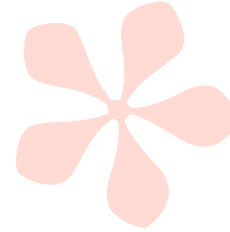
- Simple ideas for expressing gratitude: Make thank-you cards; write a thank-you letter; have a gratitude sharing hangout; write and perform a gratitude song; bake a sweet treat for someone; help with the individuals' tasks.

Provide students with guidelines for collaboration.

- First, foreshadow the next activity and ask students what skills they might need.
- Next, together, we make a plan to express gratitude to a member of our school community.
- To do this, we are going to work collaboratively.

Check understanding of the term "collaboration": Collaboration means to work together with others to make or produce something.

- What skills do you need to collaborate? Invite student ideas and write them on the board.



Part 3 Take Action

(time will vary)

Objective: Provide time for students to put their plan into action—expressing gratitude to a community member. This can be done in small groups depending upon the separation of tasks.

Note: Part 3 may take place on a day/time that is suitable.

If students are struggling to complete the assignment, here are suggestions for ways to scaffold their thinking to reach the goal:

- Use prompting questions:
 - “What should you do first, next, last?”
 - “It looks like you’re stuck. Can you identify the problem? Is it a time issue? A material issue?”
 - “It sounds like you’ve identified the problem. What element can you change to try and find a solution?”
- Encourage students to use their prior knowledge:
 - “Have you done an activity like this before? Can you remember any issues that came up that could be avoided by doing something differently?”

- Guide students to manage their resources.
 - Time reminders
 - Flexibility about materials
 - Task assignment reminders
- Support disagreements by providing resolution centered language:
 - Offer communication repair prompts such as “I hear you saying _____. Is that correct?”
 - Encourage children to identify how they’re feeling so they can name it and move on. (E.g., “I see that your arms are crossed and your body is turned away. It looks to me like you’re frustrated. Is that right?”)

Important Note: Document student action by taking pictures or video to show students during their reflection and celebration.



Brain Bite

The Amygdala is a collection of neurons in the brain that respond to threats, including stress. The tricky thing is that same system gets turned on no matter how big or small the problem. Just thinking about a threat can activate the “fight or flight” response.

Teaching to Diversity

Optional: Use the following ideas to help you to calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

Differentiation

- Instead of having students write down their ideas, have them discuss with a partner.
- Provide a copy of written definitions and/or instructions for students to reference during planning tasks.
- Break the activity down into smaller sections, e.g.:
 - Outline the plan for creating your gratitude token, including materials needed, the time it will take and when you will be able to create it.
 - When that is completed, focus on the second part of the plan by outlining how, when and where students will deliver their tokens.
- Student planning ideas can be transcribed by a peer or student aid OR students can use a recording mechanism to express their ideas orally.

Challengers

- Have students compare/contrast their gratitude expression to one from another class subject, e.g., a book they're reading, something from social studies/history.
- Have students drill farther down into how they go about choosing their expressions of gratitude. Did they choose it because it was something they would like? Does that mean the recipient will like it? This task encourages students to further use their perspective-taking skills.



Brain Bite

It's not always easy to accept a compliment. Especially if you're not tapped in to your strengths and standout qualities. Because the brain is hyper-alert to potential threats, it is wired to pay attention to negative information. This may be one reason we struggle with positive feedback and praise. Instead of talking yourself down or diminishing your achievement, try saying THANKS!

Lesson 3: We Reflect on and Celebrate Gratitude

Purpose:

- Together, students reflect on their work expressing gratitude within the school community.

Objectives:

- Students engage in self-reflection.
- Students listen to one another's reflections on their shared experience expressing gratitude within the school community.

Materials:

Chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard; copies of Gratitude Reflection sheet (found at the end of this lesson); Gratitude Journal.

Estimated Time:

40 minutes

Skills:



CRITICAL
THINKING



COMMUNICATION
SKILLS



REFLECTION
SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS
SKILLS



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 Reflect and Connect

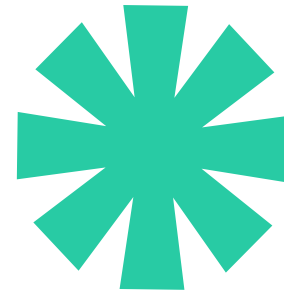
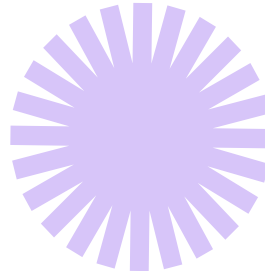
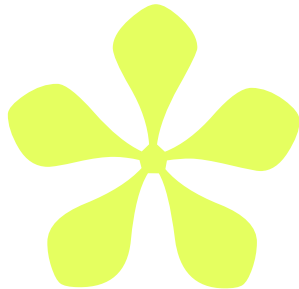
(5 minutes)

Mindful Start (Optional)

Objective: To prepare students for learning; to review lessons on mindful breathing and setting intentions.

Invite students to take a short mindful break.

- Let's begin by taking a short mindful moment.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Now, just begin by noticing how your body feels sitting here.
- No need to do anything but notice what you feel.
- Maybe you notice your feet on the ground, or the chair supporting you as you sit here.
- Now, see if you can turn your attention to your breath. Notice that you're breathing now.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.
- At your own pace, take three deep breaths in through your nose, and slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- Before we start our lesson today, reflect for a moment on our work on gratitude. Perhaps bring something to mind that you feel grateful for... maybe a kind action from somebody, or something in nature that made you happy.
- Now, if you like, set an intention for today... maybe to be curious or open to noticing gratitude. Choose an intention that best speaks to the attitude you'd like to have today.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.



Part 2 Reflection and Celebration

(15 minutes)

Purpose: To provide time for students to reflect on their expression of gratitude and how the experience may have impacted their well-being, and how they think it might have impacted the recipient of their gratitude.

Step 1: A Walk Down Memory Lane

Display the photos or videos for students to remember their work expressing gratitude within their community.

This can be accomplished with a slide show, video or photos displayed around the room for students to view as a gallery.

Instructions to students:

- As you look at the pictures (or video), notice how you feel as you remember about our work expressing gratitude within our community.

Step 2: Reflect with Another

In pairs or small groups, invite students to share their reflections on their experience expressing gratitude (what they did, how it felt and how they think the receiver felt).

Instructions to students:

- With your partner (or in your small group), share a reflection. It can be something that you noticed about how you felt, something about how you think the recipient of your gratitude felt or something you felt during our work together.

Step 3: Personal Reflection

Invite students to take a few minutes to reflect on their own personal experience working with their classmates to build connection and care in their classroom.

Note: You may choose to provide each student with a copy of the Gratitude Reflection graphic organizer found at the end of this lesson.

Alternatively, students might write a short poem or create art in their Gratitude Journal art about their experience expressing gratitude.

Instructions to students:

- Take a few minutes to write or draw your reflections on your own experience building our classroom community.
- Some ideas to get you started:
 1. Who did you choose and why are you thankful to have them in your life?
 2. What did you do?
 3. How did you feel doing it? How did the other person feel?
 4. How did the person react when you shared gratitude with them?



Brain Bite

Did you know? Proper sleep has the power to boost brain power and decision-making, charge the immune system and lower blood pressure.

Part 3 Connect

(20 minutes)

Step 1: Shared Reflection

Facilitate a class discussion focused on sharing students' reflections with one another.

Remind students to engage in respectful, active listening with one another.

Note: The Shared Reflection could be implemented as a gallery walk appreciating students' Gratitude Reflections.

Instructions to students:

- Now, we'll share as a community.
- Please share your reflections about expressing gratitude.

Facilitate student discussion (popcorn style), and write student responses on the board.

After students have had an opportunity to share, pose some new questions.

Guiding question:

- Now that we have worked together to express gratitude within our community, what would be some next steps to continue to express gratitude to those in our lives to whom we are thankful?

Note: Remind students that expressing gratitude does not have to be complicated or take a lot of time—a simple "thank you" works wonders!

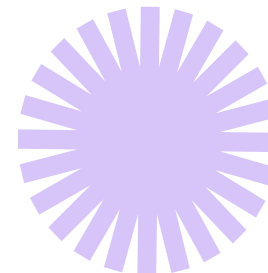
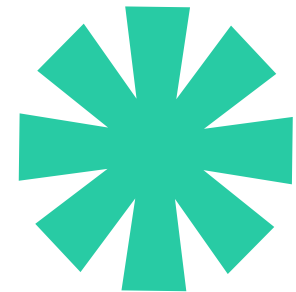
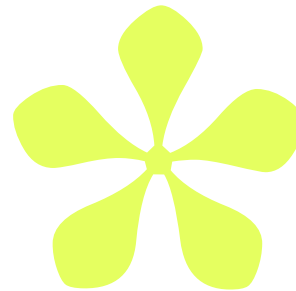
Facilitate student discussion (popcorn style) and write student responses on the board.

Step 2: Making Connections

Invite students to reflect once more and write or draw some connections they see between their initial reflection and those from their classmates.

Instructions to students:

- Take a few minutes to add to your reflections the connections you see between your initial reflections and your classmates' experiences expressing gratitude.
- Also note any next steps you think you could take to continue building gratitude in our classroom and school community.



Teaching to Diversity

Optional: Use the following ideas to help you to calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

Differentiation

- Instead of having students write down their ideas, have them discuss with a partner.
- Provide a copy of written definitions for students to reference during reflection/ planning tasks.
- Student reflections can be transcribed by a peer or student aid OR students can use a recording device to express their ideas orally.

Challengers

- Additionally, have students reflect on a way they have observed gratitude in an extended community (e.g., their town/city, their province/state, their country). What positive outcomes do you think this has?
- Have students write a magazine/blog/article about gratitude that includes:
 - An explanation of what gratitude is.
 - Why it's meaningful for the individual practicing gratitude and those around them.
 - A list of 5 to 10 ways to express gratitude.



Brain Bite

A friendly hug, a pat on the back or a gesture of kindness releases oxytocin—the hormone involved in social bonding—and reduces cortisol, the stress hormone. Try hugging your family, high fiving a friend or sharing some kind words to increase oxytocin, and notice how it feels!

Gratitude Reflection

Who I Chose and Why I Am Thankful for Them:

How I Felt Expressing Gratitude:

What I Did to Express My Gratitude:

How I Think the Other Person Felt:

WORD BANK

Active Listening – To carefully listen and focus on what someone says and also pay attention to things like their body movement, facial expressions and tone of voice.	Discouraged – To lose confidence or enthusiasm about something. Feeling less willing to do something.
Adversity – Difficulties, challenges or hardships. In other words, a very hard, stressful or sad situation, that often lasts some time. For example, like living through a global pandemic, living in poverty, experiencing discrimination or experiencing challenges at home.	Empathy – The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.
Altruism – Wanting to help or helping others because you care about them or are worried for their well-being, without needing to get something in return (a reward).	Excited – Feeling very happy and enthusiastic about something.
Angry – A strong feeling of being upset or annoyed.	Frightened – To feel afraid, fearful or scared.
Attention – The act of carefully listening, watching and/or doing something.	Frustrated – To feel annoyed and discouraged.
Attitude – A feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior. For example, having a positive attitude means to expect good, be open to challenges and to take care of your happiness and health.	Goal – Something that you are trying to do or achieve, usually with a final achievement or destination in mind.
Bystander – A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part in it. For example, someone who watches a bully pick on or tease another child but does not get involved.	Gratitude – Feeling thankful for someone or something.
Calm – Feelings of peacefulness, quietness and lack of stress.	Happy – The emotion of feeling pleasure, enjoyment or joy for something or someone.
Collaborate/Collaboration – To work together with others to make or produce something.	Hope – The feeling of expecting something positive to happen.
Community – A group of people that are connected through liking the same things or having similar identities, values or cultures.	Intention – A determination to act in a certain way. In other words, setting your mind towards and committing to an aim or purpose that you plan to do or achieve. It is something you plan to do regardless of the outcome; it's more about the type of attitude to bring to an activity.
Compassion – Having concern for the well-being of someone in distress and includes a need or desire to alleviate that person's suffering. In other words, a feeling of understanding or recognizing the suffering of a person and wanting to help them.	Judgment – An opinion or decision that something is good or bad.
Critical Thinking – To analyze or think about something using logic, facts, reasoning and intellect.	Kindness – The quality of being generous, helpful and caring about other people, or an act showing this quality.
Disappointed – To feel as if your expectations, wishes or hopes of something or someone were not met.	