

# Caring

This week we focus on gratitude which is being thankful and appreciating what you have and those around you. The class will explore gratitude as it relates to their personal life, focusing on positivity and kindness as tools towards increasing caring and gratitude.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

## Main Lesson

**Whole Class Lesson**  
30 minutes



### A Meal of Gratitude

The class will participate in a simple snack presented in a formal fashion to emphasize how much we have to be grateful for. Students will discuss all the people that contributed to their snack and then highlight a personal gratitude in writing. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

## Mini Lessons

**For Small Groups**  
15 minutes



### Showing Gratitude

Divide the class into groups of 4-6. Assign 1-2 groups to brainstorm ways to show gratitude for the following people: peers/friends, parents/family members, and community contributors (police, librarian, etc.). Allow each group to share 3-5 different ways to show gratitude for their assigned person.

**For Partners**  
15 minutes



### Gratitude Session

Set a timer for 2 minutes. Divide the class into pairs. Each person will take turns providing as many 'gratitudes' for the other person as possible during their 2 minute session. Reset the timer and repeat with the other partner. Have each pair share their favorite gratitude.

**For Individuals**  
15 minutes



### I Am Grateful For...

What are you grateful for in your life? Create a list of 10 things that you are thankful for in your everyday life. Add illustrations if time allows. Have each person share their most unusual gratitude with the class.

**Technology-Focused**  
15 minutes



### Media Based Gratitude

Divide the class up into groups of 4-6. Have each group brainstorm 3 ways to use technology to show gratitude to others throughout this week. Each person will choose one method and report back on the response they received after giving gratitude.

# A Meal of Gratitude

The class will participate in a simple snack presented in a formal fashion to emphasize how much we have to be grateful for. Students will discuss all the people that contributed to their snack and then highlight a personal gratitude in writing.

## Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

## Required Materials

- Muffins or other individual snacks for class based on allergy needs
- Napkins
- Clean up items (spray, wipes, etc.)
- Index Cards
- Pens/pencils

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explore how they currently demonstrate gratitude for what they have and those around them.
- Expand their ability to provide unsolicited gratitude.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Science shows that gratitude can improve our mental focus, reduce our stress, and improve our self-esteem and relationships with others. But having an “attitude of gratitude” can be easier said than done. This week, as you teach students about the benefits of gratitude, remember to engage in gratitude yourself. What is going well in your class right now? What is going well in your personal life? What are the small mundane things that you usually take for granted that, in reality, would make a huge impact if they were gone? Be grateful for them. Put this into practice by writing down at least five things you are grateful for each morning before you begin your school day. Post these where you can reflect on them throughout the day and where students can see (if you are comfortable sharing your list). Having students see you practicing gratitude will make it easier for them to do it themselves.



## Share

3-5 minutes

Last week we explored how we care for ourselves both physically and mentally. This week our focus shifts to that of gratitude for how others care for us. For this unit, we will be basing our understanding off of the following definition of gratitude: “Being thankful for and appreciating what you have and those around you.”

Let’s explore what gratitude means to each of us. What does gratitude mean to you? (Invite student responses.)



## Inspire

3-5 minutes

Everyone experiences and defines gratitude in a slightly different manner. Think back on a time when you were very appreciative of something someone did for you. Turn to your neighbor and share your answer.

Encourage volunteers to share their experience with the class.



## Empower

15-20 minutes

Explain that the class will now participate in a brief “meal” to remind us of all the work that goes into every meal we consume.

Ask for volunteers to:

- Pass out napkins to each student and the teacher.
- Pass out the snack.

Instruct the class to wait until everyone has received their snack (including volunteers) prior to eating it.

As the class is eating, guide them through the following conversation:

Where might this snack have come from? (homemade, store bought, etc.)

Where did the ingredients come from?

How did this snack get to the school?

Who was kind enough to serve you the snack today?

After all of the answers have been provided, explain that each of the people listed above participated in providing you a delicious and healthy snack this period. Each of these people would benefit from your expressed gratitude!

How could we show gratitude to them? (Allow the class to discuss different ideas for showing gratitude to both those present and those that they do not know personally.)



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

Provide each student with an index card. Have them write a gratitude for one person that has done something kind for them today. If needed, provide the prompt, “I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_ because....”

On the blank side of the index card, have each student illustrate their gratitude with a simple illustration that complements their written note.

Collect the index cards as an exit ticket at the end of your class time. Save the cards and read them out anonymously throughout your week to encourage gratitude as a natural response to helpfulness and kindness. IF time allows, ask for volunteers to give additional gratitudes each day.