

Gratitude

GRATITUDE means being thankful for someone or something.

LESSON 1

Read the definition of **GRATITUDE**. Say: **Gratitude is a feeling or action that grows and increases as it is expressed. Think of something or someone that you are thankful for today.** Brainstorm with students to think of things for which they are thankful. Have students answer the question: What are you thankful for? Instruct them to use a complete sentence when responding. (Examples include: I am thankful that I have a friend, I am grateful because my mom is making spaghetti for dinner tonight, I am glad that I live in America, etc.) Each time a student answers, put a tally mark on the board. As time allows, invite students to answer the question until each student has an opportunity to respond. After every student has answered, ask the class to count the tally marks to determine how many things the class is grateful for.

School/Home Link - Ask students to talk with a family member about a way they can “grow gratitude” at home.

LESSON 2

Review the definition of **GRATITUDE**. Have students write a complete sentence answering: “What are you thankful for today?” Ask students to identify people who have made a positive impact on their life. Help them identify people in the school and community who provide services for them such as librarians, lunchroom workers, police, firefighters, etc. Write the list on the board and discuss how each person helps them in some way. Read and discuss the quote by author William Arthur Ward:

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” Have students write a “thank you” letter to one of the people on the list. Remind them to use proper grammar and punctuation.

School/Home Link - Ask students to give or send their letters of gratitude to the person to whom the letter was written.

LESSON 3

Review the definition of **GRATITUDE**. Read the following quote by John F. Kennedy: **“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”**

Explain what this means. Emphasize to students that there are more ways to show gratitude than to simply say thank you. Discuss ways to show gratitude without saying thank you in the following situations.

1) Your mom makes your favorite dinner and now has to clean up the table. (Help her clean up) **2) Your dad buys you the new board game you wanted.** (Take care of it) **3) Your parents let you have a new puppy.** (Be responsible for it) As time allows, have students think of other ways to say thank you. Encourage them to show gratitude throughout the day.

School/Home Link - Ask students to show gratitude to a family member without saying thank you.

LESSON 4

Review the definition of **GRATITUDE**. Inform students that Thanksgiving is a holiday that our nation enjoys to celebrate the early Pilgrims’ first harvest. The Pilgrims were thankful and showed gratitude to the Indians who helped teach them how to grow crops. Many people celebrate Thanksgiving by having a good Thanksgiving dinner. Invite students to share Thanksgiving Day traditions as time allows. As an extended activity, have students draw a picture or describe their favorite feast.

School/Home Link - Ask students to ask a family member about traditions their family practices at Thanksgiving.

LESSON 5

Review the definition of **GRATITUDE**. Ask students to tell what they learned about showing gratitude and being thankful. Lead a discussion on the people in their lives for whom they are thankful. Examples could include: their family, a friend, a teacher, etc.) Instruct students to draw a big heart and write the words: I am grateful for you. Encourage students to give the heart to the person for whom it was intended.

School/Home Link - Tell students to share their heart with a family member.