

# GRATITUDE

## Teacher Resource

### WHAT IS GRATITUDE?

Being thankful and sharing appreciation with others.

### BENCHMARKS

- ✓ **HE.68.R.1.1** Demonstrate the ability to respond with empathy in a variety of contexts and situations. Clarification: Identifying others' feelings, perspectives, circumstances, experiences and active listening.
- ✓ **HE.68.R.2.1** Discuss how character is shaped by attitudes, decisions and actions.

### PURPOSE

- These interactive activities will help your students explore the characteristic of **gratitude** and how character is shaped by our attitudes, decisions and actions. Share the suggested introduction with your students, choose one or more of the activities below, and conclude with the suggested wrap-up. Feel free to modify or revisit activities throughout the week to continue reinforcing **gratitude**.



### Suggested Introduction:

“You are familiar with **gratitude**, how to be thankful and share appreciation with others. Showing **gratitude** is more than saying ‘thank you.’ It requires us to listen actively, understand those around us, and choose to respond kindly and with grace. When you choose to respond to others with **gratitude**, you are making a conscious decision to choose kindness and grace. This builds good character and stronger friendships.”



### Activities to Build Gratitude:

#### 1 Resiliency Reading Connection

From the Resiliency Reading List, share the short story “When Mr. Bluebird Won His Coat” from “Citizenship and Leadership” in *The Moral Compass: Stories for a Life’s Journey* by William J. Bennett. Mr. Bluebird gave to others without expecting anything in return. This is an example of how to show respect and **gratitude** to others. Mr. Bluebird’s only intention was to help Old Mother Nature. He was not seeking fame or recognition like the others. His actions mirrored characteristics of being a helpful citizen, and his humble attitude gained him the honor of being one of the most treasured birds in nature. Lead students in a discussion of why it is important to help others without expecting recognition or a reward. Visit [buildresiliency.org](http://buildresiliency.org) to learn about other books listed on the Resiliency Reading List; each title has a corresponding Family Reading Guide.

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### Activities to Build Gratitude (Continued):

#### 2 Class Discussion About Gratitude

Display this quote from Marcus Tullius Cicero: "To be content with what we possess is the greatest and most secure of riches." Cicero was a Roman politician, lawyer, orator, political theorist, philosopher and constitutionalist who lived during the years of 106–43 BC. Direct students to discuss in pairs what Cicero meant by this quote and how it applies to their own lives. How would adopting Cicero's perspective impact one's attitudes, decisions and actions?

#### 3 Character Building Through Acts of Gratitude

Help students show their appreciation to an individual or organization (e.g., local fire department, hospital, nursing home). Assign students roles to organize everyone's ideas (e.g., notetaker, group leader, supply organizer). Encourage students to reflect on how **gratitude** is demonstrated through their attitudes and actions. Be sure to discuss how **gratitude** and empathy can lead to positive choices and habits.



### Suggested Wrap-Up:

"Today, we have explored **gratitude** and discussed how character is shaped by attitudes, decisions and actions. By expressing thanks to those around us, we demonstrate **gratitude** and build resiliency. Simple acts, like writing thank-you notes or sharing what we're grateful for in our lives, cultivate an attitude of **gratitude**. Remember, being grateful can change how we see the world and make our lives more fulfilling!"