

I Am Thankful For . . .

UNDERSTAND (Why?)

Teaching gratitude encourages students to focus on kindness and positivity, which can improve classroom relationships and create a more supportive learning environment.

PREPARE (Students)

Hi everyone! Today, we're going to talk about something called gratitude, or being thankful. Gratitude is all about noticing and appreciating the good things in our lives, big or small—like our friends, family, or even just the fun of playing outside. We take time to learn about gratitude, and practice being thankful because it can make us feel happier and help to build strong friendships and a kinder community. We are going to learn about gratitude, and how to make it a habit—something we practice every day to make our hearts and minds feel good.

TEACH (Explicitly)

I am going to write the word 'gratitude' on the board. Gratitude, or thankfulness, is something that makes us feel happier and more connected to the people and things around us. Have you heard those words before? Gratitude means noticing all the good things in our lives and feeling thankful for them. Sometimes, when things are going great, it's easy to feel thankful. But even on tougher days, there's always something we can find that's good if we look closely.

Let's take a moment to think about the word *gratitude*. When we're grateful, it's like we're shining a light on the good things that bring us joy or help us feel loved and cared for. For example, maybe you feel grateful for your family, your friends, or even for something simple like your cozy bed or a tasty snack.

Now that we know what gratitude means, let's take a few moments to think about something special in our lives that we feel thankful for. Maybe it's something big, like our family or friends who make us feel loved, or maybe it's something smaller but still wonderful, like reading a good book or getting to play outside. Whatever it is, remember that there are no right or wrong answers—anything that makes you feel thankful is perfect. (Pause and give students a moment to think.)

Now, each of you will get a paper that says, "I am thankful for..." and you'll have the chance to write or draw something that you're grateful for. It could be anything at all that makes you smile or feel happy! (Pass out the papers and give students time to complete their sentence and add drawings if they'd like.) Once everyone has had a chance to write or draw, we're going to come together and share what we've created. If you feel comfortable, you can share what you're thankful for with the class. It's a great way to learn more about each other and feel connected! And who knows, maybe you'll hear something that makes you think, "Hey, I'm thankful for that too!"

Remember, gratitude doesn't have to be something we only think about once in a while—we can practice it every day! Every time we find something we're thankful for, we're giving ourselves a little boost of happiness. Let's all practice looking for those little things that bring us joy and make our hearts feel full.

SUPPORT (Pivots)

Be ready to provide examples or prompts to help guide students who might struggle to think of something they're thankful for, such as, "Think about a time someone helped you or made you smile," or "What's something in nature you enjoy, like sunshine or flowers?"