

Gratitude (Grades K-2)

For PurposeFull Families



EXPLANATION:

This month we're talking about Gratitude! The dictionary defines it as: "the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness." The definition we are using in class is:

Gratitude: choosing to notice and appreciate things in our life, things in others, and things in the world.

We want to make sure we share with students that Gratitude is 1) a choice that we get to make over and over again on where we put our focus and 2) doesn't always have to be about something positive. We can feel grateful even for tough or challenging things in our life! There is plenty of research that shows a strong connection between Gratitude and reduced anxiety, increased happiness, and better relationships. Over the course of the month, we will talk about amazing people who demonstrate Gratitude in various ways. We will talk about what we are grateful for in ourselves and in others. And we will even find Gratitude in some things we wouldn't expect to be thankful for!

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- Talk about why you were grateful for the teachers and mentors in your life then ask your children why they are grateful for theirs. Have they had a favorite teacher? If so, who? What makes that teacher a favorite? If they haven't had a favorite yet, find out what makes a great teacher in their eyes.
- Gratitude takes practice! What can we do as a family to work on expressing Gratitude more regularly to each other and those around us?
- Discuss why you are grateful for your child. Be specific: who are they? How do they make you feel? Ask them what they are grateful for about your family, your home, your neighborhood, etc..

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK:

- Has anyone ever said, "What do you say?" when they want to remind you to express Gratitude? Why do you think that saying "thank you" is so important? Why do you think we refer to it as one of our "magic words" when we're trying to teach you to say it?
- What if you woke up tomorrow and only had the things you expressed Gratitude for today? What would you still have? What would disappear? How can you express Gratitude daily?
- How do you know someone is grateful for you? What do they do? How does it feel to receive Gratitude? How does it feel to give Gratitude?

APPLICATION:

Books:

- [*Those Shoes*](#) by Maribeth Boelts
- [*A Chair For My Mother*](#) by Vera Williams
- [*The Thankful Book*](#) by Todd Parr
- [*The Giving Tree*](#) by Shel Silverstein
- [*The Most Thankful Thing*](#) by Lisa McCourt
- [*Bear Says Thanks*](#) by Karma Wilson
- [*Grow Grateful*](#) by Sage Foster

FOR YOUR READING:

- [*10 Ways to Raise A Grateful Kid*](#) by Homa Tavangar
- [*Teaching Children To Be Grateful*](#) by Charlotte Latvala

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ACTIVITY:

Start a Family Joy Journal where you keep an ongoing list of gifts (people, places, things) that you are grateful for and how you showed your Gratitude for that thing. Try to write in it each day for 30 days. Write as many things as you can think of for that day as possible. How many days until you reach 100? How about 1000?

PURPOSEFULL PURSUITS:

Thanks-Mats

Create and color some Gratitude placemats (Thanks-Mats) that you can take to a local nursing home, a homeless shelter, or a community service organization where they might eat meals, like the Police Office or Fire Station, to express Gratitude to the helpers for who they are and for what they do.

You can also keep them in your home as a consistent reminder of what you, as a family, are grateful for!

Toughness: 4

Time: 2

Type: Group

Gratitude Grounding

Take a walk through the neighborhood or a nature trail at a local park to do some Gratitude Grounding. Be mindful of all five senses as you express Gratitude using the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 technique noticing five things that you see, four things that you touch, three things that you hear, two things that you can smell, and one thing that you could imagine tasting. Share with one another what you're feeling grateful for and why as you walk!

Toughness: 2

Time: 3

Type: Group

Letters of Gratitude

Have each person in the family draw or write a letter expressing gratitude to someone special people in your life; this could include family, friends, neighbors, or community members. Don't forget to be specific and share how they make you feel!

When you have all completed the letter individually, drop them off in person or in the mail together!

Toughness: 2

Time: 3

Type: Individual

Family Gratitude Jar

Find a place in your home to display a glass jar. Cut up small slips of paper and place them next to the jar. Use the jar to collect special people, places, events, and memories that your family is thankful for. Find a time each week to add slips of Gratitude to the jar. Having a gloomy day or a challenging time as a family? Pull out the slips of Gratitude and read them aloud as a family as a reminder of all of your grateful moments.

Toughness: 2

Time: 4

Type: Individual