



## A SONG OF GRATITUDE

*"When we focus on our gratitude, the tide of disappointment goes out and the tide of love rushes in."*

—Kristin Armstrong

### OVERVIEW

Students watch a video of the song "Grateful: A Love Song to the World" and identify the many ways that exist to express gratitude.

### PLANNING FOR IT

#### WHEN YOU MIGHT USE THIS PRACTICE

- Anytime during the year

#### TIME REQUIRED

- 30-45 minutes

#### LEVEL

- Middle School

### MATERIALS

- Internet access and TV/projector
- Download or stream video: "[Grateful: A Love Song to the World](#)"
- Handout: "Grateful: A Love Song to the World" ([chorus and selected quotes](#) or [full lyrics](#))
- Whiteboard and markers
- Writing/drawing materials
- For extension: Download or stream video: "[ASL Sign Language Dictionary: Grateful](#)"

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Identify the many ways that exist to express gratitude

- Identify things in the environment that they are grateful for

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- [Making Practices Culturally Responsive](#)
- [Adapting Practices for Students with Special Needs](#)
- [Making Classrooms and Schools Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered](#)

## SEL COMPETENCIES

- Self-Awareness
- Social Awareness

## HOW TO DO IT

### REFLECTION BEFORE THE PRACTICE

Take a moment to watch "[Grateful: A Love Song to the World](#)" before showing it to students. How did you feel after watching this video? What are some small things in your life that you are grateful for?

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### MANY WAYS TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE

- Explain to the class that we often think of gratitude in connection to people who have done kind and caring things for us. But many people also feel grateful for things that simply exist in nature, things that are beautiful, cause us to feel awe, or make us feel inspired.
- Ask:
  - *Can you think of examples of things like this from your own life?*

#### WATCH THE VIDEO

- Tell the class that you are going to show a video called "Grateful: A Love Song to the World." Ask them to notice things in the video that make them feel happiness and gratitude.
- Show the video "Grateful: A Love Song to the World" (length: 4:57 minutes).
- Hand out the lyrics from the chorus and quotes from the video OR the lyrics from the entire song.
- Ask:
  - *What do these words mean to you?*
  - *What are some of the "small things" that are gifts that you saw in the video?*
  - *What are other "small things" that are gifts that you can recall from your own experience?*

#### WATCH THE VIDEO AGAIN

- Next, ask students how they typically express gratitude. Then, tell the class that you are going to show the video a second time, and that this time they should watch for all the different ways they can find in which people are expressing gratitude.
- After the students have seen the video a second time, ask:
  - *What are some of the ways of expressing gratitude that you observed?*
  - *Can you think of other ways to express gratitude that you have seen or experienced?*
  - *Why do you think expressing gratitude is important?*

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## CLOSURE

- Ask students to reflect on how it felt to think of the small things in their lives they are grateful for. What emotions came up for them? Is this a practice they might use? If so, when? How might they encourage others to try it?

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## EXTENSIONS

- Have students write or draw about “small things” that are gifts in their own lives.
- Students can also make collages about these “small things”—either individually or as a group—using pictures from magazines.
- Students may realize that some of the gestures of gratitude in the video are American Sign Language. Show the video [ASL Sign Language Dictionary: Grateful](#), a two second video showing the American Sign Language gestures for the words “thankful” and “grateful.” Alternatively, you may learn the sign using the video and teach the sign to the class.
- Ask students to review the lyrics again, focusing on quote #2. Then think of a time when something bad happened in their lives, but there were still things they could be grateful for. Ask if thinking about things that you are grateful for during difficult times can be helpful. Ask them to explain or write about their thoughts.

## REFLECTION AFTER THE PRACTICE

Do you notice if students are expressing more gratitude as a result of this practice?

## THE RESEARCH BEHIND THE PRACTICE

### EVIDENCE THAT IT WORKS

In addition to its [benefits for adults](#), research suggests that gratitude is also [good for youth](#), going hand in hand with greater hope and optimism, higher satisfaction with life, and fewer health complaints.

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Students who experience [greater positive emotions](#) may put in more effort to overcome obstacles, [engage](#) in classroom activities more, and be [less stressed at school](#). In addition, [positive mental health in childhood](#) is linked to educational achievement and professional success later in life.

## SOURCE

“[Nurturing Gratitude From the Inside Out: 30 Activities for Grades K–8](#)” was originally developed by [The Inner Resilience Program](#), in partnership with the Greater Good Science Center and the John Templeton Foundation.

For the entire curriculum, click [here](#).