



California Social Emotional
Learning Modules

Professional Learning Toolkit

7.4 GRATITUDE for Educators
8.4 GRATITUDE for Students



Greater Good in Education



Topics 7 and 8: Mindfulness and Well-Being

Topic and Module Overview

Caring for Ourselves: The Science of Emotional Resilience	MOD 1.1	Understanding Your Emotions
	MOD 1.2	Navigating Your Emotions
	MOD 1.3	How to Be Kind to Yourself
	MOD 1.4	How to Be Compassionate Without Suffering So Much
	MOD 1.5	Self-Awareness, Emotional Resilience, and Equity
Safety & Belonging in Classrooms and Schools	MOD 2.1	Why Belonging Matters
	MOD 2.2	Knowing Ourselves First: Surfacing Our Beliefs About Social and Emotional Well-Being and Belonging in Schools
	MOD 2.3	The Questions of Belonging: Interventions to Help Students Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.4	Meeting Students' Psychological Needs to Help Them Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.5	Cultivating Belonging Through Teacher-Student and Peer Relationships
	MOD 2.6	Building a Belonging School Through Trust and Psychological Safety
Teaching for Social, Emotional, and Academic Development	MOD 3.1	Preparing to Support SEL in Classrooms
	MOD 3.2	Explicit SEL Instruction
	MOD 3.3	Planning for Social-Emotional-Academic Development
	MOD 3.4	Integrating SEL into Learning
Committing to Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	MOD 4.1	Unpacking Our Identities: Addressing Identity, Power, and Privilege
	MOD 4.2	Engaging in Meaningful Conversations about Race and Equity
	MOD 4.3	SEL Instruction Through a Culturally Responsive Lens
	MOD 4.4	Elevating Student Voices
	MOD 4.5	Evaluating Our Systems, Policies, and Procedures
Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health	MOD 5.1	Defining and Understanding Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.2	Recognizing the Signs of Childhood Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.3	Creating Healing-Centered Environments
	MOD 5.4	Developmental and Other Strategies for Healing
	MOD 5.5	Mental Health Crisis Intervention: Steps and Strategies
Supporting SEL through Family and Community Engagement	MOD 6.1	Exploring Family and Community Engagement with an SEL Lens
	MOD 6.2	Building Partnerships with and Honoring the Contributions of Diverse Families
	MOD 6.3	Listening and Communicating Effectively with Families
	MOD 6.4	Expanded Learning and SEL: Collaborating Across In-School and OST Contexts
	MOD 6.5	Aligning around SEL Through Community Partnerships




Topic and Module Overview

Mindfulness and Well-Being for Educators	MOD 7.1	Purpose for Educators
	MOD 7.2	Self-Compassion for Educators
	MOD 7.3	Kindness and Compassion for Educators
	MOD 7.4	Gratitude for Educators
	MOD 7.5	Awe for Educators
	MOD 7.6	Courage for Educators
	MOD 7.7	Empathy for Educators
	MOD 7.8	Mindfulness for Educators
	MOD 7.9	Humility for Educators
	MOD 7.10	Forgiveness for Educators
	MOD 7.11	Hope for Educators
Mindfulness and Well-Being for Students	MOD 8.1	Purpose for Students
	MOD 8.2	Self-Compassion for Students
	MOD 8.3	Kindness and Compassion for Students
	MOD 8.4	Gratitude for Students
	MOD 8.5	Awe for Students
	MOD 8.6	Courage for Students
	MOD 8.7	Empathy for Students
	MOD 8.8	Mindfulness for Students
	MOD 8.9	Humility for Students
	MOD 8.10	Forgiveness for Students
	MOD 8.11	Hope for Students



Learning Objectives

TOPICS 7.4 and 8.4: GRATITUDE for Educators and Students

Module	7.4 Gratitude for Educators	8.4 Gratitude for Students
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define gratitude and discuss the different ways to understand it • Explore what contributes to or increases gratitude • Explore the importance of developing our own capacity for gratitude as educators • Review the benefits of gratitude for educators • Explore a variety of ways to boost our own gratitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define gratitude and discuss the different ways to understand it • Explore how gratitude develops in young people • Review the benefits of gratitude and cross-cultural considerations • Explore a variety of ways to practice gratitude in the classroom
California Standards for Teaching Profession (CSTPs) 2024 CSTPs (full pdf) 	<p>CSTP 1: Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning 1A: Focus on Students (1A-5); 1B: Knowledge of Students (1B-1); 1C: Student Backgrounds and Family (1C-3); 1D: Diversity and Equity (1D-1)</p> <p>CSTP 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning 2A: Learning Environment (2A-3); 2B: Student Behavior (2B-3); 2C: Organizational and Resource Management (2C-4); 2D: Inclusive Environment (2D-3)</p> <p>CSTP 3: Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Students 3A: Knowledge of Subject Matter and Pedagogy (3A-3); 3B: Connecting Subject Matter to Real-World Contexts (3B-1); 3D: Content and Skills across Subjects (3D-4); 3E: Curriculum Materials and Resources (3E-4)</p> <p>CSTP 4: Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students 4A: Planning Instruction for Student Learning (4A-2); 4B: Designing and Developing Instruction for Student Learning (4B-1); 4C: Facilitating Instruction for Student Learning (4C-5)</p> <p>CSTP 5: Assessing Students for Learning 5A: Understanding and Using Assessments (5A-1)</p> <p>CSTP 6: Developing as a Professional Educator 6A: Reflection on Practice (6A-1); 6B: Focused Professional Learning (6B-5); 6E: Ethical Conduct and Professional: (6E-2); 6F: Activating Access and Equity (6F-1); 6G: Personal Growth and Well-Being (6G-1)</p>	
CA TSEL Guidelines Sourced from CDE (July 2023)	Link Objectives to Developmental Indicators in California Transformative SEL Competencies . The California Department of Education (CDE) aims to support and advance the efforts of educators across California who are working to fully integrate systemic SEL and equity by building on the promise of T-SEL as a concept.	



Additional Resources

TOPICS 7.4 and 8.4: **GRATITUDE for Educators and Students**

Articles (Adult-Oriented)

[How Cultural Differences Shape Your Gratitude](#) Americans say thanks a lot, but other cultures may have a deeper understanding of gratitude.

[Why Is Gratitude So Hard for Some People?](#) If you have trouble with gratitude, you're not alone. Luckily, there's something you can do about it.

[Six New Studies That Can Help You Rediscover Gratitude](#) Here is some new research that might help you practice gratitude and feel happier in life.

[What Can the Brain Reveal About Gratitude?](#) New research is exploring the brain regions linked to gratitude— and it helps explain gratitude's many benefits.

[Can Gratitude Make Your Job More Meaningful?](#) A doctor explores how thankfulness can help health care workers find profoundly rewarding emotional experiences at work.

[Can You Be Grateful Without Saying Thanks?](#) Practicing gratitude for life's random blessings could make us happier and more generous— just like gratitude directed at other people.

[Why a Grateful Brain Is a Giving One](#) The neural connection between gratitude and altruism is very deep, suggests new research.

[Two Ways to Help your Team Members Feel Heard](#) A new study finds that grateful, humble managers create more open, innovative working environments.

Articles (Student-Oriented)

[Teaching Gratitude Can Help Reduce Cyberbullying](#) A new study finds that students who learn about gratitude for a month are less likely to bully their peers.

[The Best Way for Parents to Respond to Ingratitude](#) A new study explored how different parenting strategies might help promote gratitude in kids.

[What Don't We Know About Gratitude and Youth?](#) Gratitude helped Giacomo Bono survive a childhood disease. Now he's trying to understand how to help kids cultivate thankfulness.

[If You Practice Gratitude, Your Children Can Benefit, Too](#) A recent study finds that gratitude can improve parents' well-being and their relationships with their kids.

[How Gratitude Can Help With Students' Anxiety](#) Often overlooked, gratitude may be a powerful way to boost high schoolers' well-being, a new study finds.

Customizable Slides for Students

[What is Gratitude?](#)

Download and customize these slides to teach students about gratitude.



Additional Resources

TOPICS 7.4 and 8.4: GRATITUDE for Educators and Students

Podcasts and Happiness Breaks

[Science of Happiness: A Lesson in Thanks and Vulnerability](#) [22:38] A junior high school teacher spent his life defying stereotypes about how men should express their emotions. Here he takes on a new challenge: getting his students to express gratitude.

[Science of Happiness: Is There Someone You Need to Thank?](#) [25:04] Is there someone important you've never properly thanked? Hear how award-winning children's book author, Yuyi Morales, discovers the power of writing a "gratitude letter" to the librarian who changed her life.

[Science of Happiness: How Gratitude Benefits Your Brain](#) [24:36] Can you train your brain to be more grateful? Todd Zwillich, host of The Takeaway takes on the challenge.

[Happiness Break: 5 Minutes of Gratitude, with Dacher](#) [7:54] Not sure how to start practicing gratitude? Psychologist Dacher Keltner guides you through a practice that can help you see the good things in your life that you might otherwise overlook.

[Happiness Break: A 10-Minute Guided Practice, with Dacher](#) [9:50] We guide you through a reflection of three things you're grateful for today. This practice is shown to boost happiness, connection, and motivation while reducing stress.

[Happiness Break: Feel More Gratitude, with Eve Ekman](#) [8:19] Renew your sense of gratitude by remembering acts of kindness, with social scientist and meditation teacher Eve Ekman.

Videos

[A Teacher Reflects on Teaching Gratitude](#) [16:59] Educator Stephen Leeper shares what he learned from gratitude journaling with his students.

[How to Talk with Kids About Gratitude](#) [2:08] Parents can have conversations with kids to help them experience all four parts of gratitude.

[How Parents Can Foster Gratitude in Kids](#) [12:27] At the Greater Good Gratitude Summit, Dr. Andrea Hussong of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, explores the role that parents can play in fostering the development of children's gratitude



Additional Resources

TOPICS 7.4 and 8.4: GRATITUDE for Educators and Students

PRACTICES for Students

Elementary (in order of duration)

[Sharing Gratitude Stories](#) Pairs of students tell each other about a time they each felt grateful. (15—20 minutes)

[What Friends Do](#) Students read *Splat Says Thank You!* and explore how kindness and gratitude strengthen friendship. (20—30 minutes)

[Beauty Everywhere](#) Students use singing as a way to express gratitude. (20—30 minutes)

[Gratitude Mirror](#) Students deepen their understanding of gratitude by “embodying” it. (20—30 minutes)

[What If We Didn't Have This](#) Students deepen their understanding of gratitude by imagining what life would be like without certain things in our classrooms or schools. (20—30 minutes)

[Giving is Receiving](#) Students read *The Quiltmaker's Gift* and reflect on how acts of kindness require intention and effort on the part of the person who does them. (20—30 minutes)

[Feelings of Gratitude](#) Students practice observation skills and identify the emotions related to gratitude. (30 minutes)

[Expressing Gratitude](#) Students first reflect on why another person acted kindly towards them, and then practice expressing gratitude both verbally and in writing. (30 minutes)

[Another Way of Saying Thanks](#) Students learn to say “thank you” in American Sign Language and brainstorm non-verbal ways to express gratitude. (30 minutes)

[What Really Matters](#) Students read *Those Shoes* and identify things that get in the way of expressing gratitude. (45 minutes)

Middle and High School (in order of duration)

[Gratitude Interview](#) Students interview an older person about gratitude, deepening their understanding of gratitude. (30 minutes)

[The Cycle of Gratitude](#) Students create a gratitude cycle, demonstrating that the positive emotions that come from gratitude keep on giving. (30—45 minutes)

[Obstacles to Expressing Gratitude](#) Students create a comic strip that shows how to overcome obstacles to gratitude. (45 minutes)

[Gratitude Quotes](#) Students demonstrate their understanding of gratitude by role-playing a variety of quotes about gratitude. (45 minutes)

[People Who Made a Difference](#) Students research, present to the class, and express gratitude to an historical figure whose actions have benefited society. (several days)

Adult (in order of duration)

[Gratitude for the Wider School Community](#) Use this practice at the beginning or end of a meeting to express gratitude for members of the school community. (less than 15 minutes)

[Eight Inner Strengths for Leaders](#) School and teacher leaders use reflective questions to assess leadership strengths individually, with each other, or as a whole group, and then develop a plan for improvement. (less than 15 minutes)



Module 7.4

GRATITUDE for Educators



TAKE IT DEEPER:

The Art of Gratitude

Materials:

- Blank journal or sketchbook
- Art supplies such as colored pencils, markers, or paints

Instructions:

1. Set aside a few minutes each day to reflect on what you are grateful for. This could be anything from small moments of joy to big accomplishments to a person. Try to be specific and detailed in your descriptions, and focus on how each thing or person makes you feel.
2. Choose one thing or person that you are grateful for and create a visual representation of it in your journal. This could be a drawing, painting, or collage that captures the essence of the thing or person you are grateful for. Use your art supplies to bring your gratitude to life.
3. As you create your visual representation, try to immerse yourself in the positive feelings that come with reflecting on gratitude.
4. Repeat this practice daily, choosing a new thing or person to be grateful for each time. Over time, your gratitude journal will become a visual reminder of all the things and people in your life that you have to be thankful for.

Tips:

- Don't worry about being a "good" artist. This practice is about expressing gratitude, not creating a masterpiece.
- Experiment with different art supplies and techniques to find what works best for you.
- If you're struggling to think of something to be grateful for, start small. Even something as simple as a warm cup of tea or a sunny day can be a source of gratitude.
- Set a reminder or schedule a specific time each day to do this practice, so it becomes a regular habit.



Module 7.4

GRATITUDE for Educators



TAKE IT DEEPER:

Ode to Common Things

“So the freshness lives on in a lemon,
in the sweet-smelling house of the rind,
the proportions, arcane and acerb.”
- Pablo Neruda, Odes to Common Things

The above quote is an example from the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's famous collection of odes called "Odes to Common Things." It is a fun exercise to reflect on very mundane, common things that we might take for granted - and instead show them some gratitude.

You can write an ode, or just a list of simple things - like your favorite socks, your thumbs, or brand new pens or stationery.

This practice was inspired and adapted from Elena Aguilar's book *The Onward Workbook - Daily Activities to Cultivate your Emotions Resilience and Thrive* (2018)



Module 8.4 GRATITUDE for Students



TAKE IT DEEPER: Gratitude Chain

For an alternative to gratitude journaling or letters, and one that can add to a grateful culture and even aesthetic in the classroom, try this Gratitude Chain practice. Cut out the following slips of paper and invite students to write what they are grateful for on one of the slips. This can be an anonymous practice to make students feel more comfortable.

You can do this as a standalone practice, creating a gratitude chain together in one class period, or have these slips of paper available all the time, in a jar on your desk. Students can be invited to grab one anytime they are feeling grateful, fill it out, and add it to your “living” classroom gratitude chain strung across your ceiling or walls.

Today I am grateful for:

Today I am grateful for:

Today I am grateful for:

