projectheart

Crafting Gratitude: Being Thankful Every Day

Time Commitment:
30-40 minutes

Grade Level:
3rd-5th

3Ts Used:
Time
Talent
Treasure

OVERVIEW

After reading a chapter of *Unstoppable!* (or another book from the list below), students will have the opportunity to use their own time and talent by designing a gratitude jar to share with family members, friends, or service providers. This lesson is meant to remind students all there is to be thankful for and all the ways they can show gratitude to others.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

We believe that teaching gratitude can show students all the good around them, even when things don't go their way. Research suggests that gratitude inspires people to be more generous, kind, and helpful, and strengthens relationships. While gratitude and being thankful can feel interchangeable, showing gratitude involves more of a deeper state of appreciation and recognition of the goodness in one's life—beyond an immediate response to something given to us. Teaching gratitude will help students to recognize the goodness in their lives, and will help lead them to want to share their blessings with others who are less fortunate.

MATERIALS:

- *Unstoppable! 15 Inspiring Stories of Kids in Philanthropy* (provided).
- Other book options—*The Gratitude Jar* by Katrina Liu, *Gratitude is My Superpower* by Alicia Ortego.
- Cardboard jars/containers for final draft (provided)—one (1) per student.
- Gratitude slips to put into jars (provided)—one (1) set of eight blank slips per student.
- Gratitude Conversation Starters (provided)—one (1) set of eight cards per student.
- Project Heart stickers—one (1) per student.



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MATERIALS CONTINUED

- Plain white paper (for rough drafting)
- Scissors
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers
- Glitter
- Glue
- Other materials to decorate

CONNECTION TO CAREERS:

- Artist/designer
- Local philanthropist
- Local nonprofit

INSTRUCTIONS

- Connect this activity to a book. Options might include:
  - *Unstoppable! 15 Inspiring Stories of Kids in Philanthropy.*
  - *The Gratitude Jar* by Katrina Liu.
  - *Gratitude is My Superpower* by Alicia Ortego.
- While reading, talk to the students about expected and unexpected behaviors. Some questions you might ask along the way are:
  - What do you think _____ will do?
  - Was your prediction correct? Why or why not?
  - Have you ever felt this way before? Did you try to look for the positives, or did you get stuck on what was "wrong" or not going your way?
  - What things are you thankful for in your life?
- Explain to students they will be decorating a "gratitude jar" to help both remind them of all the amazing things they have in their lives as well as practice showing gratitude to others.
- Each day or week, write down one thing you are grateful for and put it into the jar as a reminder of the good things in your world. Over time, you'll see your jar of gratitude grow, showing you that even on days when things don't go the way you wanted them to, you still had something to be grateful for.

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INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED

- Brainstorm a list of groups of people that students can write the gratitude slips with.
- Brainstorm a list of things that can be written on the blank slips. These are the slips that students will write on every day or every week.
- Using a piece of paper as a rough draft, have students plan what they might write or draw on the outside of their gratitude jar. When they are ready, they can create their final version on their cardboard containers.
- Provided in the kit is one set of eight gratitude conversation cards for each student. Have students spend time cutting the cards out in class or send this home to be cut out another time. Students can use these conversation cards with their families or a special adult to identify all the good in their lives.
- Tell the students that they will each receive a Project Heart sticker at the end of today's lesson. They can put this sticker on a water bottle, the front of a folder—anywhere that will help them remember to be thankful for the things they have in life.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why is it important for us to be thankful for what we have?
- Who can you practice showing gratitude with?
- How did you use your creativity when creating your gratitude jar?
- What impact do you think showing gratitude will make on those around you?

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EXTENTION OPPORTUNITY

- Consider connecting gratitude to the seasons. Create gratitude turkeys in the fall, gratitude ornaments or snowflakes for the winter holidays, or potted plants with gratitude messages for spring.

SKILLS ALIGNMENT

Entrepreneurial Skills:

- Creativity/Innovation: Demonstrate curiosity, imagination, and eagerness to learn more, build on personal experience to specify a challenging problem to investigate, and engage in novel approaches, moves, directions, ideas, and/or perspectives, and synthesize ideas in original and surprising ways.

Personal Skills:

- Initiative/ Self-Direction: Demonstrate personal skills through self-awareness, initiative and self-direction, personal responsibility and self-management, adaptability and flexibility, and perseverance and resilience to pursue opportunities to engage and learn interests.