

Gratitude & Mental Health
Physical & Health Education, Language Arts
Grades 4-7

Purpose of the lesson

Studies have shown that expressing gratitude can increase happiness, reduce depression, and strengthen resiliency. There are also several physical health benefits such as, reduced blood pressure, less chronic pain, and increased energy. People that express gratitude often report having a higher self-esteem. Gratitude is a helpful practice to do before bed and can improve your sleep at night. Overall, the purpose of this lesson is to teach youth the many benefits of incorporating gratitude into their lives.

Curriculum Competencies:

Physical and Health Education

- ◇ Identify and describe factors that influence healthy choices (Grade 4)
- ◇ Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being (Grade 4)
- ◇ Describe factors that positively influence mental well-being and self-identity (Grade 4)
- ◇ Analyze and describe the connections between eating, physical activity, and mental well-being (Grade 5)
- ◇ Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others (Grade 4-7)

Language Arts

- ◇ Use writing and design processes to plan, develop, and create texts for a variety of purposes and audiences (Grade 4-5)
- ◇ Express, feelings, ideas, and experiences in creative ways

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- ◇ Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors
- ◇ Learning requires the exploration of one's identity

Video

“The Science of Gratitude”: You can find the video [HERE](#)

Teacher Guiding questions:

- What are the benefits of practicing gratitude?
- What are the physical health benefits?
- What are the benefits for our brain?
- What are some ways to practice gratitude?

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

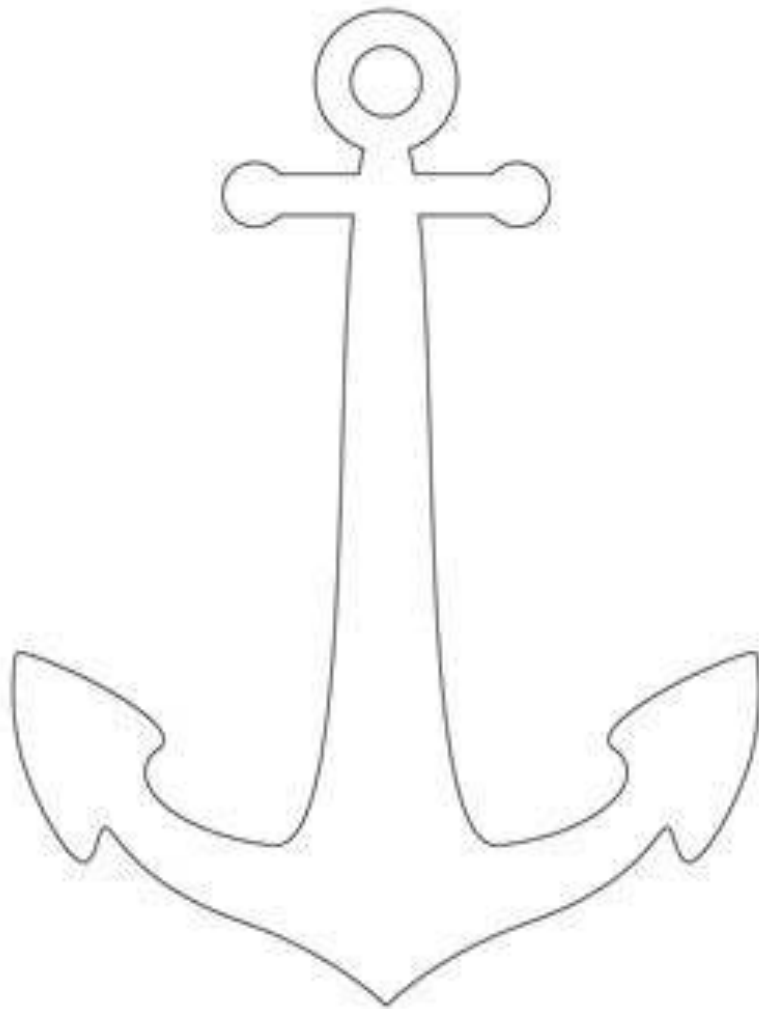
Preparation: Print and photocopy the find your anchor gratitude worksheet & kindness cards for group discussion. Assorted magazines and felts/sharpiers to create gratitude collage.

1. Watch the video on gratitude. Find it [HERE](#). **Pause the video and use the Guiding Questions to spark discussion.**
2. Provide copies of the kindness cards to small groups of students for discussion. You can find them [HERE](#)- How can we promote kindness and gratitude at our school? Which cards are your favourites? Can you think of any more ideas of how to be kind?
3. Use the find your anchor worksheet below to allow for creative expression of peaceful imagery and gratitude. Provide students with magazines to cut out images for their collages. See below for a sample of the completed project.
4. Once students have finished their collages allow them the opportunity to share them with the class. Some possible discussion questions:
 - What is similar in each of the collages?
 - What is different about each person's collage?
 - How do you feel in sharing your collage and expressing gratitude?
5. **Additional Resources for Teachers:** Check out findyouranchor.us to order your own find your anchor box for your classroom or school community. The 52+ reasons to live cards have beautiful images that help to spark conversations around positivity and gratitude. Incorporate a gratitude routine in your class for example, at the end of the day- a "ticket out the door" question might be: "What is one thing that you are grateful for today?". Or try incorporating a gratitude journal where students can keep their thoughts of gratitude private and write an entry each week! Have fun incorporating gratitude and seeing the benefits it has on your mental health!

Find Your Anchor!

What makes you feel calm & grounded?

Decorate your anchor with words & collage images
representing peace & a sense of calm



Sample of completed Anchor project:

