



# GRATITUDE – KS4

## LESSON PLAN

### WHY GRATITUDE MATTERS

- Studies suggest practicing gratitude positively benefits mental health.
- Gratitude can boost self-esteem and self-value.
- Gratitude helps decrease anxiety and stress.
- Gratitude can help increase motivation, productivity and achievement.
- Gratitude can help alleviate negative emotions such as anger, fear, jealousy and disappointment.

### AIMS FOR CHILDREN

- To explore the benefits associated with gratitude.
- To understand and experience being kind to themselves and others with gratitude.
- To help enhance children's self worth and self esteem.
- To create the habit of looking for the positive in life.
- To encourage focusing on what they have, not what they do not.
- To understand how gratitude can help create a positive outlook.
- To appreciate that although we can not always control what will happen to us, we can control how we choose to perceive it.

### LESSON OUTLINE

TOTAL: 35 mins

- A discussion on giving and receiving 5 mins
- Random acts of kindness and thoughtful gestures 5 mins
- Invisible gifts 5 mins
- Gratitude benefits, morning gratitude incantations 5 mins
- Creating a gratitude journal 10 mins
- Being grateful against the odds, the power of, 'but luckily' 5 mins

A DISCUSSION ON GIVING &  
RECEIVING

5 mins

1. The teacher asks the class if they enjoy receiving gifts, and encourages the class to share some examples of gifts they have been given that they have really appreciated.

2. The teacher asks if the class enjoy giving gifts? The class are encouraged to think about a time they gave a gift to someone that was appreciated (for example a birthday, or at Christmas). Teacher asks how that gratitude and appreciation of the gift made them feel? Did they feel excited before they gave the gift? If so why? This is to encourage the class to appreciate that giving and the associated gratitude feels good.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS  
AND THOUGHTFUL GESTURES

5 mins

**Giving a compliment**

We often see nice things, but may feel too shy, envious or uncool to say something, but giving the invisible gift of a compliment could change someone's day. Consider how you feel when someone has given you a compliment about a piece of schoolwork, your hair, clothes etc.

**A random act of kindness**

Holding a door open, sharing some sweets, offering to make a cup of tea for a parent.

**A thoughtful gesture**

Washing the dishes, asking to carry something for your teacher, asking someone who is sad if they need to talk.

INVISIBLE GIFTS

5 mins

**1. The teacher asks class to consider, what may be an invisible gift they could give to someone? Encourage the class to consider invisible gifts, prompt if needed.**

Answers may include; *Saying thank you.*

Class to consider how might the teacher may feel if the class said thank you for the lesson?

**2. The teacher asks what may be an invisible gift the class could give to themselves?**

Answers may include; *Giving myself a compliment. Being kind to myself. Appreciating my qualities, friends, family, school, possessions.*

MORNING GRATITUDE  
INCANTATIONS

5 mins

The teacher leads a discussion on the benefits of gratitude, how it helps with our mental health to think and feel positively. How being grateful can help dilute negative thoughts, beliefs, feelings by switching our focus.

Some say gratitude is the 'antidote to anxiety' as it may distract you and help you to appreciate the positive things around you.

The teacher prompts daily incantation examples, which could include;

- I have somewhere to live, whilst some are homeless.
- I have food every day, some people don't.
- I woke up this morning, someone somewhere did not.
- I have clothes to keep me warm, some people do not.
- I have a phone to keep in touch with people.
- The bus prevents me having to walk to school.
- My dog is loyal and always there for me.
- I can read, which makes my life easier.

Open discussion for other ideas.

GRATITUDE JOURNAL

10 mins

- The teacher hands out or shows 'Gratitude Journal' activity sheet (attached)
- Pupils are encouraged to complete the sheet for the previous day.
- Pupils are encouraged to create a Gratitude Journal to complete every evening at home which they should also read the following morning when they wake up.

The teacher explains, that whilst you cannot always control some of the things you might face or what happens on a daily basis, you can manage how you start and conclude your day to ensure it is from a happier and better perspective.

BEING GRATEFUL AGAINST  
THE ODDS

5 mins

1. The teacher asks: If you struggle to compliment yourself on how you look, how could gratitude help?

Examples;

**"I hate my thighs"**

ASK yourself: What do your thighs allow you to do?"

***"I am grateful to my thighs, they help me to walk, run, dance."***

**"I hate my nose"**

ASK yourself: What does your nose allow you to do?"

***"I am grateful to my nose which helps me to smell my food, perfume, aftershave."***

**"I hate that scar"**

ASK yourself: What does your scar represent?"

***"I am grateful to that scar, because it is a sign that I survived."***

BEING GRATEFUL AGAINST  
THE ODDS CONTD.

2. The teacher concludes: if anything goes wrong, if you feel bad about anything just add the two words **BUT LUCKILY** to the sentence.

Examples;

**"I didn't do too well in my test"**

ADD, BUT LUCKILY

***"I didn't do too well in my test BUT LUCKILY I now know what I need to work on to improve."***

**"My friend isn't speaking to me"**

ADD, BUT LUCKILY

***"My friend isn't speaking to me BUT LUCKILY when he/ she calms down we can hopefully sort it out."***

**"I don't understand that topic in maths"**

ADD, BUT LUCKILY

***"I don't understand that topic in maths BUT LUCKILY I can ask my teacher."***

**"My sister annoys me"**

ADD BUT LUCKILY

***"My sister annoys me BUT LUCKILY, I know she cares about me really."***