

# Gratitude

Encouraging gratitude in the  
classroom and beyond.



**MALK**  
FLUENCERS

**Ages: 14-16**

**Time: 60 minutes**

**Materials: Ice Breaker Template**

**'How I Will Practise Gratitude'**

## Preparation

In preparation for this session, you can print out the resources attached to enhance the experience for the students – but it is not necessary to complete the lesson.

**\*To prepare for activity 1 (gratitude notes) activity, use either post-it notes or just pieces of paper, and write down all of the students' names individually and put them in a bowl/box**

This exercise has been developed in partnership with Alyx Steele, Milk Education's Choreographer & inspirational speaker, adapted from the presentations she can offer.

## Introduce the 'safe space' & inclusive environment

Creating a safe space is crucial when delivering this lesson, and ensuring the classroom is an inclusive environment at all times. Encouraging the students to be respectful and aware, and making sure you are sensitive when it goes to discussion and sharing individual's ideas and thoughts.

Explain to the class that nobody will be judged on their answers or opinions, and make it clear that it's okay to say the wrong thing, or question things - as long as we learn and correct them where needed. Respect is the key.

At Milk Education, we encourage an open and honest approach to discussing these 'stigmatised topics' – and want that to extend to your classroom.

## Ice Breaker (5-10 Mins)

### The Gratitude Game

This ice breaker is designed to get the students to start thinking of what gratitude is and how implementing it into their day can positively impact their life. It's a great way to warm up and ease into the later exercises.

Depending on the group, you can offer this option in different ways. Whatever the students would prefer and how you think they will respond best:

- Use printable grid to write their answer under each one
- Use post-it notes
- Shout out (if they are comfortable / confident to do so)
- Write on white boards

### Statements:

1. **Name a person you are thankful for**
2. **Name a place you are thankful for**
3. **Name a food you are thankful for**
4. **Name a thing you are thankful for**
5. **Name a hobby you are thankful for**
6. **Name anything else you are thankful for**

## What is Gratitude (10 Mins)

Following the icebreaker, begin by asking the students what they think gratitude is and discuss in small groups / on their tables. Allow 5 minutes for discussion and then begin the next section.

So let's learn a bit about what gratitude is and how it can show up in school or in your life...

**“A positive state of being. A feeling of thankfulness and appreciation for someone or something; and a social emotion that signals our recognition for that around us.”**

Gratitude is... focusing on what's good in our lives and being thankful for what we do have. Linking with mindfulness, pausing to notice and appreciate things that we often take for granted; whether that is a person, a place, or thing.

**So, what does gratitude mean to you? (give some examples)**

**Prompts...**

- Having a good group of friends
- The moments with my family
- Enjoying my favourite food / drink
- Getting to play sport
- What else?

## Gratitude Notes (15-20 minutes)

Once the students understand what gratitude is and what it could mean to them - it's time to get into the first activity.

\*(To prepare for this activity, use either post-it notes or just pieces of paper, and write down all of the students' names individually and put them in a bowl/box.)

'Gratitude notes' is an exercise that encourages connection between students and an open / inclusive environment!

The Prompts (in case students struggle to think of things to write about classmates):

- 'Thank you for being there for me when...'
- 'I appreciate you....'
- 'I enjoy it when we get to do (this) together...'
- 'I am grateful that you do (this)...'

## How To Practice Gratitude (20 Mins)

For this exercise, go through the 5 ways to practice gratitude - which will help the students to think of tangible ways to act on this in their daily life.

Go through each of these and how they can use them. Get the students to choose one of the 5 to try now in class in groups or by themselves.

There is extra information about each of the practices, if they need more help once they have chosen.

### 5 ways to practice gratitude & key points:

- **In the morning, think of 3 things you're grateful for to start the day**
  - Focus on the positive
  - Great way to start your day
  - Encourage positive thinking
  - Habit to implement into your routine
- **Start a gratitude journal**
  - Spend time each day writing what you are grateful for
  - A good way to reflect on the week
  - Get into the habit to shift your mindset
  - Can monitor how your thoughts change

## How To Practice Gratitude Cont. (20 Mins)

- **Thank someone new every week**
  - Take a moment every day to thank someone
  - Could be in a message, letter, or face-to-face
  - Make someone's day
  - Show appreciation for those that help you
- **Meditate**
  - Taking quiet time each day
  - Let your mind be still for a few moments
  - Look up guided meditations on YouTube
  - Sit in a positive moment for a while
- **Focus more on others' intentions**
  - If someone gifts you something, or is nice, think how they wanted to bring good into your life
  - Focus on the positive intentions they had
  - Visualise their intention to make you happy
  - Find a way to reciprocate this

## How Will I Implement Gratitude (5-10 Mins)

This then leads onto the next task well - the students can choose their favourite activity to use in their day-to-day life.

Get the students to think of a way that they will now practice gratitude in their everyday life. Reaffirm why it is so important to practice gratitude.

### Benefits of Gratitude:

- DECREASED NEGATIVE EMOTIONS
- INCREASED EMPATHY FOR OTHERS
- IMPROVED OUTLOOK
- HIGHER SELF-ESTEEM
- MORE INNER STRENGTH
- BETTER SLEEP
- HEART HEALTH

And so much more!

Use the printable templates to encourage the students to continue practising gratitude in their everyday life.



# How Will I Implement Gratitude?



A large rectangular box containing five horizontal dashed lines, intended for writing a response to the question above.



# The Gratitude Grid



<p><b>Name a person you are thankful for:</b></p>	<p><b>Name a place you are thankful for:</b></p>	<p><b>Name a food you are thankful for:</b></p>
<p><b>Name a thing you are thankful for:</b></p>	<p><b>Name a hobby you are thankful for:</b></p>	<p><b>Name anything else you are thankful for:</b></p>

