

# GIVING THANKS

- **Expressing Gratitude** lesson for grades 2-3
- Teaches the importance of being a **grateful person**
- Helps students to **practice gratitude**
- Super **low prep!**



# movement-based opener



Having an opener **hooks students into the learning** and sets the stage for the rest of the lesson

# teaching about gratitude

Provides **brief teaching** and a **short practice activity** for how to notice and express gratitude

Gratitude starts on the inside.

It starts with noticing when someone does something helpful or kind for us and then feeling glad about it.



what we think and feel on the inside!

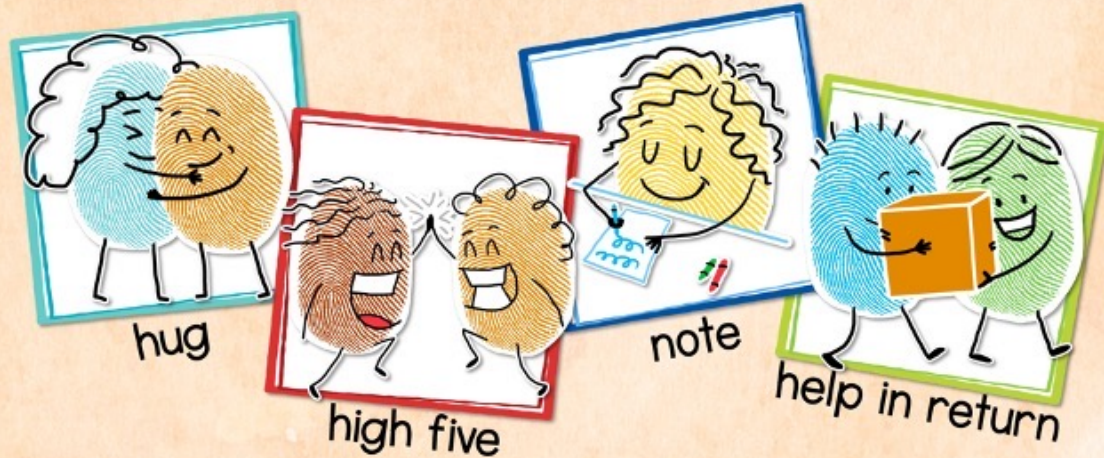


"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

-William Arthur Ward

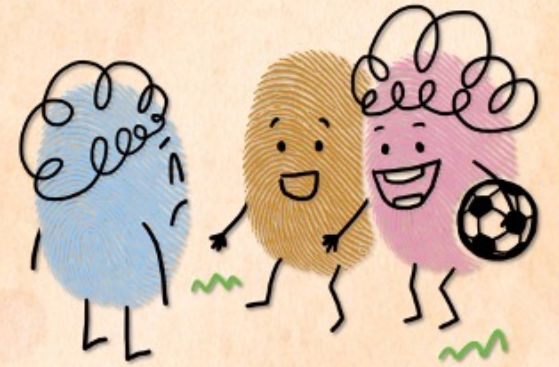
# gratitude in action

Or we can show gratitude with our actions!



EXAMPLE: Noah was sitting by himself at recess, unsure of what to do. Myra noticed him and asked, "Do you want to play soccer with us? You can be on my team."


Noah realized she was being kind by including him and felt happy that she thought of him. He said, "I'm glad you asked me. I love playing," and gave her a big smile.



Teaches students that **gratitude** isn't just expressed with **words** but with **actions** too

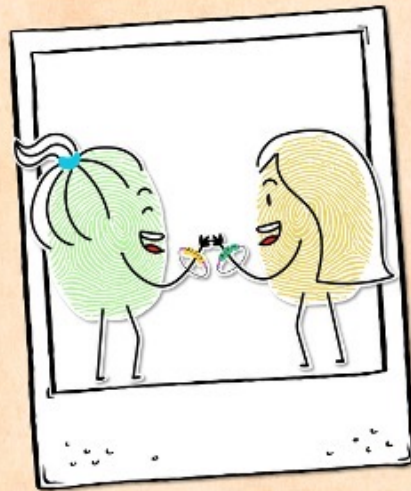
# practice scenarios

Students explore different scenarios to practice **expressing gratitude** through **words and actions**



You had a great time at your friend's birthday party.

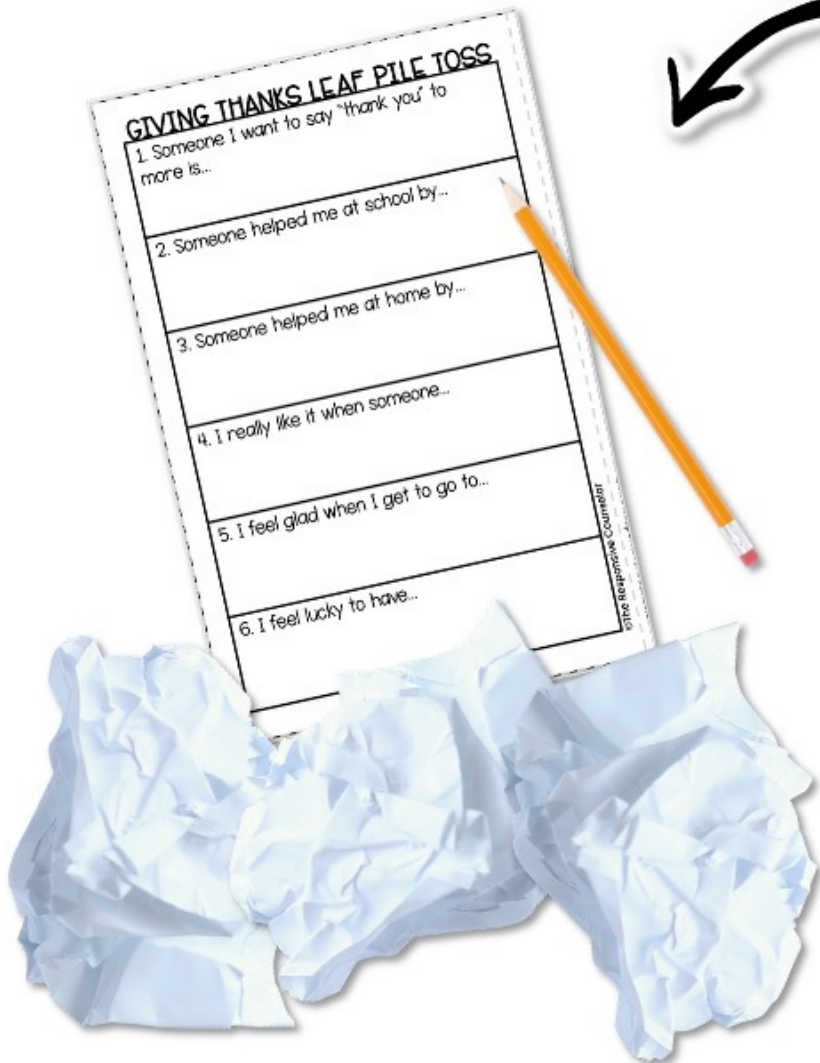
What are you thinking?  
What can you say?



Someone brought you back a bracelet from their vacation.

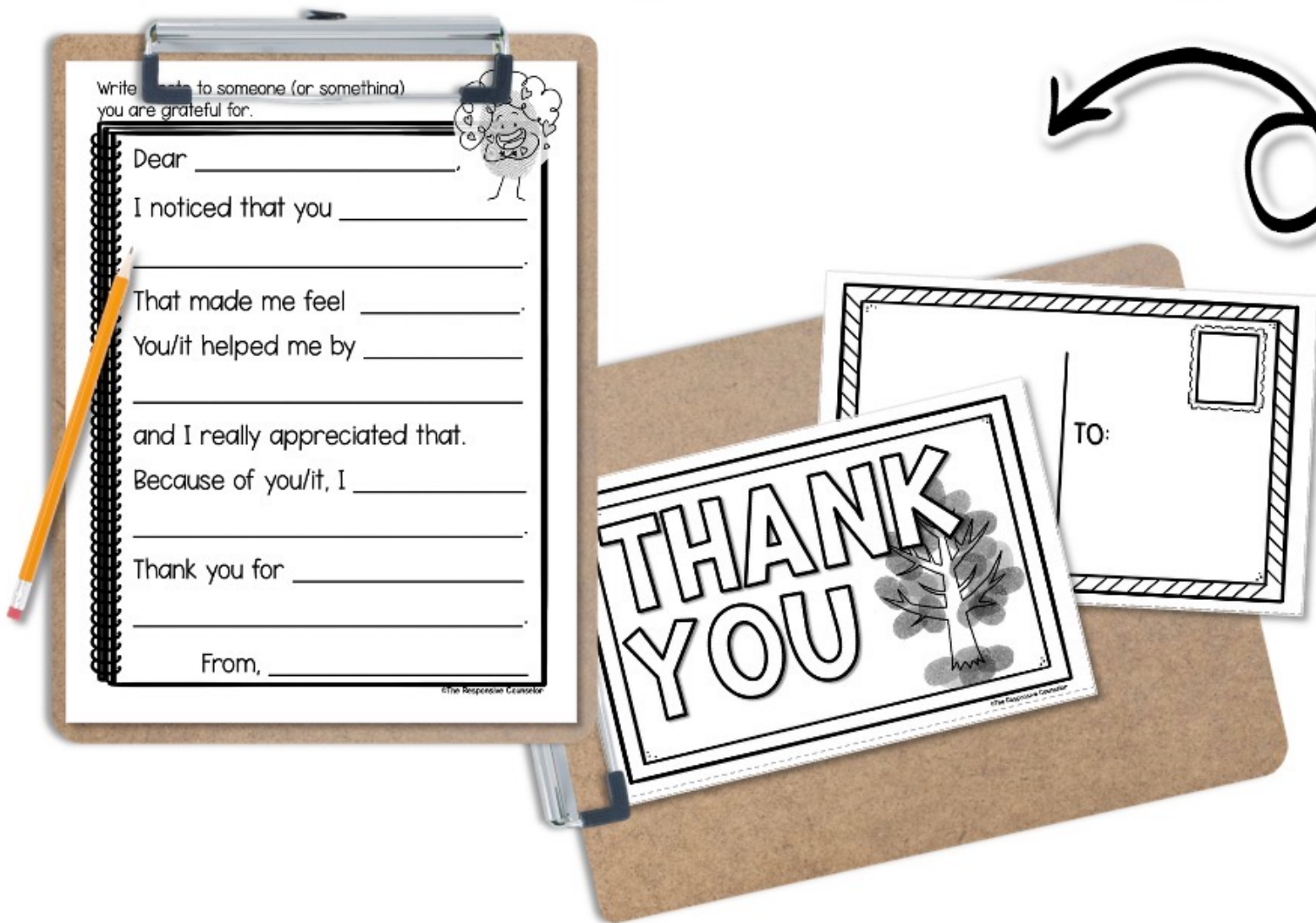
What are you thinking?  
What can you say?  
What can you do?

# practice activity



**Interactive activity** where students **practice giving thanks**, toss their response into a "leaf pile," and pick a new paper to answer on and keep the thankfulness flowing.

# independent practice



**Two options** for students to **write a thank you note** to someone they appreciate and are grateful for

# closing questions

## Closing Questions



- Who is someone you're going to give thanks to?
- When we notice good things in our lives and feel grateful, how else do we feel?
- What is something you feel grateful for today?

Closing questions provide students with the opportunity to **reflect** on the lesson and **apply** it to themselves

# lesson plan

ASCA  
and  
CASEL  
aligned  
lesson  
plan

**GIVING THANKS**

## Giving Thanks

**Objective(s):** Students will understand how gratitude starts in our insides and moves to our outsides and will practice expressing gratitude.

**ASCA Mindsets/Behaviors:** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional, and physical well-being; Effective coping skills

**CASEL Domains:** Self-Awareness, Social Awareness

**Additional Materials Needed:** Writing utensils

**PLAN/PREP**

**Slideshow:** Review the directions, suggested scripting, and slides ahead of time. Hide slides as needed to accommodate shorter lessons.

**Practice Activities:** Print and copy the "Find Someone Who" worksheet and/or the "Choosing Gratitude" worksheet.

**LESSON OUTLINE**

<b>Opener</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Slide 1: "Today, we are talking about gratitude. Specifically, we are talking about expressing our gratitude or giving thanks."</li><li>Slides 2-5: Read each of the prompts on the slide, asking students to stand up if the statement applies to them. Ask them to sit back down after each. If time allows, ask some students to share about their experience.</li><li>Slide 5: "Those are all examples of times you might be grateful! Times when someone has done something helpful or kind for you."</li></ul>
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**GIVING THANKS**

<b>Class Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Slides 14-19 (continued): Give students a few moments of think time, then ask for volunteers to share out. You might have students first do a turn-and-talk.</li><li>Slide 20-21: Now we're going to practice thinking about some of the things we are grateful for with an activity called "leaf pile toss." Follow the directions on the slide. Repeat until all prompts have been answered. If you need to make this a faster activity, have students complete two sentences at a time. At each round, invite students to first read the answers on the page from classmates who answered already before adding their own response to the next prompt(s). When all of the sentences have been completed, process and reflect on the activity using the prompts on the slide.</li></ul>
<b>Solo Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Slide 22: Students write a thank-you postcard to someone. Print single-sided for less time, or double-sided (and prompt students to color the front) if you have more time.</li><li>Slide 23: Students fill in the blanks to write a thank-you letter to someone.</li></ul>
<b>Closing Circle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Slide 24: If possible, gather students in a circle. You can do a sequential circle and give each student the opportunity to answer or pass. Or you can call on students who wish to share.</li><li>Ask one or more of the questions on the slide.</li><li>Give each student a chance to answer or pass.</li></ul>

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Optional/  
suggested  
scripting to  
use

Outline  
breakdown  
with activity  
directions

Hi, I'm Sara! I create resources for elementary students, counselors, and teachers that improve social emotional learning and help students be their best selves. My focus is creating resources that are effective (using research-based best practices) and engaging (through collaborative learning and relevant scenarios) for all types of learners and populations.



## Education

B.A. from Michigan State University  
Psychology and Anthropology

M.S. from Vanderbilt University  
Community, Research, and Action

M.Ed. From Vanderbilt University  
Human Development Counseling:  
School Counseling & Mental Health

## Experience

I'm a former school counselor from a large southeastern school district with a wonderfully diverse group of students. I created and implemented a data-based comprehensive school counseling program while helping classroom teachers and administrators implement schoolwide SEL and restorative practices. Now, I share my ideas and resources to reach students and help educators across the world!

Let's Connect:

