

Giving Thanks and Showing Gratitude

gratitude |'gratə,t(y)ōd| **noun**
the quality of being thankful;
readiness to show appreciation
for and to return kindness.

**A LESSON PLAN EXPLORING THE
SIMPLE AND PROFOUND
QUALITIES OF GRATITUDE.
FOR AROUND THANKSGIVING --
OR FOR ANY TIME.**

UNIT: (possible unit connections)

- **Language Arts** – writing (journaling, letters); print media; advertising
- **Social Studies** – customs of other cultures/countries of the world
- **Science** – digestion; scientific terms used in foods
- **Math** – ratios; percentages; proportions
- **Art** – collages
- **Music** - jingles
- **FACS** – junk food; healthy diets; desserts; calories; nutritional content labels

GRADE(S): 6-8

Length of Lesson:

- One class period (about 50 minutes). This can easily be expanded to fit interdisciplinary classes, more than one class period, and other grade levels.

Standards Addressed:

- (Minnesota – Language Arts)
6.7.4.4.; 7.7.4.4.; 8.7.4.4.; 6.7.10.10.; 7.7.10.10.; 8.7.10.10.; 6.9.1.1.; 7.9.1.1.; 8.9.1.1.; 6.9.3.3.; 7.9.3.3.; 8.9.3.3.; 6.11.3.3.; 7.11.3.3.; 8.11.3.3.

Objectives:

Students will be able to.....

1. Produce clear and coherent writing.
2. Creatively and clearly write for a short period of time with a specific purpose in mind.
3. Effectively engage in collaborative discussions.
4. Determine and evaluate the purpose and soundness of a speaker's argument.
5. Demonstrate appropriate understanding of language and its conventions using expressive word choices in writing.

Materials Needed:

- “Dud Gifts” (These are gifts for students to have during classtime. Ideally, these are items that students will not be interested in and will not consider a gift. Examples could include: a sock, a broken pencil, used paper, a torn folder, a dead plant, a paper cup, a bandaid, a tissue, etc. There should be enough of these “gifts” for each student in the class, and can be returned to you at the end of class. The “gifts” can then be re-used in the next class period.)
- student journals
- notebook paper
- a large stack of magazines for students to cut pictures from
- candy bars (See the attached worksheet for the list of candy bars needed. Adapt this to fit class needs, fund availability, and number of students.) Make a transparency for teacher use, if needed.
- pencils

Meeting needs of individual, ethnic, and diverse students:

Example – use of multiple learning styles (tactile, verbal, auditory, visual, cooperative, etc.), use of multiple discussion formats (linear, non-sequitur, partner, groups, etc.)

TACTILE, VERBAL, AUDITORY, VISUAL, COOPERATIVE, KINESTHETIC, COLLABORATION, NON-SEQUITUR

Agenda:

About 5 minutes

- (Anticipatory set) Give students a “Dud Gift.” (See explanation in **materials needed** section above.) Without any elaboration, have students journal briefly about how they feel about your gift to them. They can write about their feelings, opinions, impressions, etc. of the gift. After the quick writing time, tell students that you will discuss this further later during the class period. Set aside for now.

About 5 minutes

- Talk to students about values, specifically gratitude. Ask what it means to them. Ask students to share times when they experienced kindness, and how it made them feel. Explain that it involves kindness, empathy, and being thankful.

About 10-15 minutes

- Have students cut out pictures from magazines that show three very important things in their lives. These should be things they value highly, so encourage them to be thoughtful in their choices.
- Have each students choose one item they identified as important to them, and share it with the class.

About 15-20 minutes

- **Candy Bar Gifts Activity.** Use the worksheet attached. Allow students to go around the room to identify the candy bar that best matches each student, and then share as a class. Or, this can simply be done all together using a transparency (or SmartBoard, etc.). Ideally, each student will receive a candy bar as a gift when the worksheet is completed. (If cost is an issue, a paper award or a smaller variety/size of candy bars would also work. Bulk candy is a great price right after Halloween.) The worksheet is a tool used to facilitate a discussion, so there is no need to collect/grade it.

About 5 minutes

- Remind students about the “Dud Gift.” Compare/Contrast the two gifts received in class today. Explain that showing gratitude means being appreciative of the thought behind the gift itself, and that they need to be grateful whether they liked the gift or not. A gift shows thoughtfulness. So does gratitude. Be appreciative of not only what they have, but of what others choose to give to them.

About 2-3 minutes

- (Closure Activity) Have students write a brief Thank You note for the “Dud Gift” they received. This should demonstrate understanding of gratitude – kindness, empathy, and thankfulness – regardless of the desirability or the quality of the gift. Depending on student ability, reminders may need to be given on the structure of informal letters. Students should turn this in as they leave the classroom.

Assessment(s):

Class discussions; journal responses; Venn diagramming of gratitude of gifts; informal letter writing; group interactions; thoughtful consideration of values in finding pictures in magazines

RaceBridges Comment:

The above lesson and classroom activity explores Gratitude in a streamlined brief style for busy teachers and leaders.

RaceBridges invites you to use this lesson in the spirit it was created for the RaceBridges site. It is our hope that in using this lesson plan with the recommended links and activities you and your students will deepen your appreciation for the often hidden gift of human gratitude.

For the gifts in our lives. For the gift of each other -- no matter how different we are from each other. Enjoy!

See many more lessons, stories and videos on a variety of diversity themes visit: <http://RaceBridgesForSchools.com>



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Candy Bar Gifts Activity

Name _____

Gift each classmate with a candy bar that symbolizes them! Write the name of the student who is the closest match to one of the candy bars listed below.

1. Skittles (dresses in bright, colorful clothing) _____
2. Turtles (loves animals) _____
3. Snickers (loves to giggle and have fun) _____
4. Peeps (talks with a quiet voice) _____
5. Baby Ruth (athlete; loves baseball) _____
6. Bit O' Honey (never gives up; very sweet) _____
7. Whoppers (great storyteller) _____
8. Pop Rocks (loves music, especially current songs) _____
9. Nestle Crunch (chews on pencils) _____
10. Charleston Chew (loves to dance) _____
11. Chuckles (funny; loves to laugh) _____
12. Butterfinger (slips, trips, or breaks things frequently) _____
13. Payday (forgets lunch money frequently) _____
14. Tic Tacs (loves games and gaming) _____
15. Starburst (reaches for the stars) _____
16. Dove (wants everyone to be friends; dislikes fighting) _____
17. Bottle Caps (encourages recycling and living "green") _____
18. Jaw Breakers (future lawyer; strong debater) _____

19. Mr. Goodbar (loyal; values friendship; kind)

20. Lifesavers (helps others in need)

21. Spree (loves to shop)

22. M & M's (good speller; loves texting)

23. Skor (top athlete)

24. Almond Joy (spreads happiness and cheer)

25. Hershey's Kisses (loves to flirt)

26. Sugar Babies (has a sweet tooth)

27. 5th Avenue (loves big cities and travelling)

28. Nutrageous (the class clown; loves attention)

29. Pixy Stix (believes in the impossible; a dreamer)

30. PEZ (loves to talk)

31. Jolly Rancher (loves to tell jokes)

32. Three Musketeers (loves to be in a group)

33. Milky Way (daydreamer)
