



At a glance: Ripple Effect (grades 3–5)

Welcome to ThinkGive!

This packet of materials is designed to give you an overview of our ThinkGive® Ripple Effect program. 3rd–5th graders learn about kindness and become empowered to effect change and impact others with small actions. The central theme is the ripple effect and how our actions can have a broad impact because of it. Students focus on taking action primarily within their class community.

Included in this packet:

- Scope + Sequence (12–lessons)
- Sample Lesson Plan (Give to a friend)
- Program Overview + Impact

Connect with us!

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Questions? info@thinkgiveproject.org

We look forward to connecting with you!
– The ThinkGive Team



Scope + Sequence: The Ripple Effect (ThinkGive® Elementary, grades 3-5)

Students learn about kindness and become empowered to impact themselves and others with small actions.

The central theme is the ripple effect and how their actions can have a broad impact because of it.

Students' central focus is on others in their class/group; as the program progresses, they start looking outward to their school community.

Lesson name	Lesson Summary	Students will Examine	Central Quote	ThinkGive Three	SEL Core Competencies
Introduction	Students are introduced to the ThinkGive Project and the fundamental importance of kindness. They explore how to give non-tangible gifts by doing an activity around sharing compliments, then discuss the ripple effect and how kindness can spread throughout their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What constitutes a "gift." - The ripple effect and how it works with kindness. - The powerful potential of kind actions. 	<i>"You can never know the ripple effect you create with one tiny gesture of kindness."</i> – Elle Sommer	N/A	Relationship-building Relationship skills Social awareness
Give to yourself	Students will discuss the importance of self-care and self-compassion. The focus will be on caring for their physical self; students will consider the importance of a healthy body and how that can affect their emotional self, and will identify ways to care for their bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ways to care for their physical self. - How caring for their physical self (which impacts their emotional self) prepares them to give to others. - How physical self-care can start a ripple within themselves. 	<i>"Be kind to yourself so you can be happy enough to be kind to the world."</i> – Misha Collins	TRUE	Self-awareness Self-management Reflecting
Give to a member of your family	Students reflect on the uniqueness of their families and consider how diversity between and within families impacts themselves, others, and their communities. Guide them in understanding that taking family members for granted is normal, and it's important to make an effort to appreciate and connect with family. These two topics will help them identify who in their family to give to—and help them give authentically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ways families are different and diverse. - How their family is unique, and how this uniqueness impacts themselves and others. - How it's easy to take family members for granted. 	<i>"Families are like branches on a tree. We grow in different directions, yet our roots remain the same."</i> – Anonymous	TRUE	Appreciating diversity Respect for others Reflecting
Give to a friend	Students will explore the qualities of strong, meaningful friendships. During the discussion, spend time on the value of differences/diversity among friends in providing varying perspectives. Use the book <i>The Other Side</i> or <i>The Gift of Nothing</i> to explore friendships meaning and question whether it is more people or things that make us happy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The qualities of meaningful friendships. - How differences between friends can strengthen a friendship. - Different ways of giving and receiving in friendship. 	<i>"How many slams in an old screen door? Depends how loud you shut it. How many slices in a bread? Depends how thin you cut it. How much good inside a day? Depends how good you live 'em. How much love inside a friend? Depends how much you give 'em."</i> – Shel Silverstein	TRUE	Relationship skills Appreciating diversity Perspective-taking
Give spontaneously	This lesson will introduce students to taking action/giving spontaneously. Central to being spontaneous is awareness. In the video "Kindness Boomerang Hits the Rails in NYC," students will see the power of spontaneous actions. Finally, they will consider how spontaneous action can lead to the ripple effect—and how their actions might start a ripple! The ThinkGive Three focus is on Brave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What it means to be spontaneous. - It is important to be aware and notice opportunities to take action. - How can spontaneous kindness start a ripple effect? 	<i>"No single act of generosity remains in isolation. The ripples are many."</i> – Sarah Winman	BRAVE	Social awareness Analyzing situations Social engagement Self-confidence
Give to someone who is older or younger than you	In this lesson, students first discuss what kindness means to them and others. The discussion then encourages them to become more aware of their school community and people they might take for granted. Taking positive action to impact a student in another grade or an adult at the school might require bravery. The scenario activity allows students to consider specific situations and how they might choose to act positively and inclusively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is kindness? - The importance of including people of different ages in their school community. - How their actions impact how others might view them, and how they view themselves. 	<i>"When you are kind to others, it not only changes you, it changes the world."</i> – Harold Kushner	BRAVE	Social awareness Relationship skills Reflecting

Scope + Sequence: The Ripple Effect (ThinkGive® Elementary, grades 3-5)

Students learn about kindness and become empowered to impact themselves and others with small actions.

The central theme is the ripple effect and how their actions can have a broad impact because of it.

Students' central focus is on others in their class/group; as the program progresses, they start looking outward to their school community.

Lesson name	Lesson Summary	Students will Examine	Central Quote	ThinkGive Three	SEL Core Competencies
Give to community	Students will focus on their school community. They consider who is part of that community, what role(s) those people play, and how every member plays an important part. They consider what they might do to give back to their school community. During the discussion, focus on how commonalities and differences among people make the community stronger and more inclusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The people who make up their school community and how they contribute. - What do they contribute to their school community? - How can they help make their school community stronger and more inclusive? 	<i>"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."</i> – Coretta Scott King	SMALL	Social awareness Relationship skills Responsible decision-making
Share with someone	Students will learn how sharing is different from giving. Most students will think of tangible items when they think about sharing. Encourage discussion about sharing intangible things and how powerful and challenging they can be. The ThinkGive Three focus is on True; guide students to share authentically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The difference between giving and sharing. - What are ways to share themselves (intangible gifts)? - Why can it be hard to share something personal? 	<i>"It is in the shelter of each other that people live."</i> – Irish proverb	TRUE	Self-awareness Relationship skills
Give to someone you admire	Students will consider who they admire at school and explore admiring someone for a character trait vs. a skill. They discuss and even debate whether skills can be used to develop character traits or vice versa. By the end of the lesson, students will have identified 1-3 people they admire at school and might choose to take action to celebrate. This action might demand some vulnerability and bravery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who in their school they admire, and why. - The difference between character traits and skills. - Ways that character traits can help develop skills. 	<i>"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."</i> – Maya Angelou	BRAVE	Respect for others Relationship-building Reflecting
Give to your environment	The environment is a big topic. This lesson aims to help students understand how to care for our planet by identifying a sizeable environmental problem and reducing it to manageable pieces. Their action should be small; that way, it might become a habit and/or create a ripple effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What they appreciate about the environment. - How small actions matter in helping the environment. - How to tackle a large environmental issue by breaking it into smaller actions and steps. 	<i>"The Earth is what we all have in common."</i> – Wendell Berry	SMALL	Responsible decision-making Self-management Self-efficacy
Give your gratitude	For this final prompt of the Ripple Effect program, students will explore gratitude—what it means, how it impacts oneself and others, how one cannot be grateful without being aware of what's around you, and how taking people or things for granted is its opposite. True gratitude comes from the heart, and can be shown in many ways. The gratitude hearts activity will show students how one can start a ripple in a community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What noticing has to do with practicing gratitude. - The importance of feeling and expressing gratitude. - How showing gratitude is the opposite of taking something or someone for granted. 	<i>"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."</i> – William Arthur Ward	TRUE	Self-awareness Reflecting Social awareness
Wrap-up	Today is all about celebrating the positive ripples each student—and the class as a whole—has created during ThinkGive. Students will reflect on all the actions they have taken throughout the program and will highlight the actions they are most proud of, and that took the most bravery. Finally, they will reflect on the "So What?" (why ThinkGive matters) and the "Now What?" (how they can carry forward their learnings).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why ThinkGive matters and what they have learned about the power of kindness and inclusion. - The big ideas they will carry forward with them. - Reflect on the ripple effects of participating in this program. 	<i>"The best way to measure how much you've grown isn't by inches or the number of laps you can now run around the track, or even your grade point average – though those things are important, to be sure. It's what you've done with your time, how you've chosen to spend your days, and whom you've touched this year. That, to me, is the greatest measure of success."</i> – R.J. Palacio	N/A	Self-awareness Reflecting

Give to a Friend



grades: 3-5



30 minutes

“How many slams in an old screen door? Depends how loud you shut it. How many slices in a bread? Depends how thin you cut it. How much good inside a day? Depends how good you live ‘em. How much love inside a friend? Depends how much you give ‘em.”

– Shel Silverstein

Lesson Summary

Students will explore the qualities of strong, meaningful friendships. During the discussion, spend time on the value of differences/diversity among friends in providing varying perspectives. Use the book *The Other Side* or *The Gift of Nothing* to explore friendships meaning and question whether it is more people or things that make us happy.

Students will Examine

- The qualities of meaningful friendships.
- How differences between friends can strengthen a friendship.
- Different ways of giving and receiving in friendship.

Pre-Activity Prep

- (Optional) Print *The Other Side* ([PDF](#) version) by Jaqueline Woodson (THINK.GIVE section).
- Hang 4-5 sheets of paper around the room, each with a Carousel on Friendship question or statement written on it (REFLECT section).
- (Optional) Print or digitally share an Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (1/student) (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

ThinkGive Journals
Student Journal Guide ([PDF](#))
Chart paper (4-5 sheets)
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Give to a friend](#)
Read-aloud book: [The Other Side](#) (3:57)
Read-aloud book: [The Gift of Nothing](#) (2:27)

SHARE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Option A

Encourage students to pair up with someone they haven't paired up with before. Each student shares their action. As time permits, have one or two students share what their partner shared with the whole group.



TEACHER TIP

Students who feel dissatisfied with a gift or did not give a gift should focus on moving forward—the opportunity to be kind is always there. Remind students that ThinkGive aims to build a habit of kindness.

Option B (longer activity):

Maître d'

Call out: Table for (numbers 2-5)

- Students gather in groups based on the number called out and share their actions.
- Call out another number. Students form new groups and share their actions. Continue rounds as time permits.

Discuss:

- Did you notice ways you take your family for granted?
- How was your action True (authentic)?
- In what ways did your action create a ripple? Remember, how taking this action made you feel is also a ripple.

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Option A

Read-aloud book: The Other Side (3:57) ([PDF](#)) by Jacqueline Woodson.

Discuss:

- Why did the fence stretch through the town? What does the fence represent?
- Why wasn't it safe for Clover to climb over to the other side of the fence? Why was it safe for Annie to climb over to Clover's side of the fence?
- Why did Annie want to sit on the fence?
- Why didn't Sandra let Annie join the jump rope game but agreed to let Annie join them later that summer when she was with Clover?
- How would you describe the friendship between Clover and Annie?



CONNECTION

Students write an acrostic poem about friendship and its meaning in their ThinkGive Journals.

DIGGING DEEPER

- What other "fences" might exist in friendships?
- How might friendships work through these fences?

Option B

Watch: The Gift of Nothing (2:27) by Patrick McDonnell (read-aloud book). Explores the importance of friendship, the meaning of gifts, and how people and relationships make us happy.

Discuss:

- Was Mooch being a good friend when he gave Earl nothing?
- Share when you received or gave the gift of nothing. What was it like?
- Might there be another gift that Mooch gave Earl? How do you know?
- Why are friends important?
- Do friends need to agree on everything, have similar interests, or act in similar ways?

DIGGING DEEPER

- How can a “gift of nothing” be preferred over a material gift?
 - Is it OK to prefer a material gift over a “gift of nothing”? How so?
-

REFLECT

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Carousel on Friendship

Post 4–5 sheets of chart paper around the room. Write a different question or statement from the options below on each paper.

Question/statement options:

- Being a friend is easy. Why or why not?
- What kind of friend do you want to be?
- What makes someone a good friend?
- Why is it important to have friends with varied interests?
- What things can you learn from a friend with a different background than you?

Students form groups and spread out, each standing by a different chart paper. Give each group a different colored marker. Each group reflects on the question posed, writing their ideas on the chart paper.

After a minute or two, groups rotate. Students read through what the other group(s) wrote, agree with (checkmark), and/or add any additional responses. Continue rotating until all groups have responded to every question, then discuss the questions/statements as a class.

DIGGING DEEPER

Each group makes a “friend poster” with their definition and four examples.



CONNECTION

Video: [Our Diversity Makes Us Stronger](#) (5:00). This read-aloud by Elizabeth Cole celebrates our diversity and reminds us that it strengthens our friendships and communities.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Take Action

Explain: Look for opportunities to impact a friend positively. Keep your eyes open for small moments when you can take action and be a Daymaker for a friend. Give bravely and create wide ripples that spread through our community!

Brainstorm

- Can you appreciate a friend who has helped you?
- Can you recognize a new friend?
- Can you acknowledge a friend you've taken for granted?
- Can you notice how your friends are feeling and be there to help?

Things to Consider

- The ThinkGive Three focus is on giving a True gift. Be authentic!
- Consider what a friend might want, need, or enjoy.
- Create a ripple effect in your class, school, or community!

Closing Quote

Use this quote to close out the lesson. The reflective questions could serve as an Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)).

"How many slams in an old screen door? Depends how loud you shut it.
How many slices in a bread? Depends how thin you cut it. How much good inside a day? Depends how good you live 'em. How much love inside a friend? Depends how much you give 'em." – Shel Silverstein

- What does this quote mean to you?
- Do you think that friendships are made stronger through kindness?

★ THINKGIVE THREE

1. True: be authentic
2. Small: small is all
3. Brave: step into your courage zone



VOCAB

Daymaker: noun; a person that takes time to do something kind for someone else, thus making their day better.



CONNECTION

Shel Silverstein (1930–1999) was an author, cartoonist, and musician, making him a very talented man! Silverstein is best known for children's literature and poems.

Sample Actions

- I apologized to a friend I disagreed with.
- I sat with a friend on the bus because they were all alone.
- I gave a thank you note to a friend who was there for me when I had a challenging situation with my family.

Student Journal Questions

- 🗨 What's your greatest strength as a friend? What's something you could do to be a better friend?
- 🗨 Describe a time when you found it hard to be a friend.
- 🗨 Write about a time you made a new friend. How was this person different or similar to you?
- 🗨 Describe a time when you took a friend for granted.

Extensions

DO

Potato Activity

Follow the procedure and facilitate the discussion in the Potato Activity ([PDF](#)) "to help youth eliminate stereotyping and recognize the uniqueness of each individual."

People with Disabilities Activity

Run the People With Disabilities activity ([PDF](#)) with your class to have your students "experience a condition similar to what some people with learning disabilities deal with regularly" and gain more understanding (empathy) for friends who may have a learning disability. Prepare for and complete Procedure 1 with accompanying discussion questions. Then, complete Procedure 2 with accompanying discussion questions.

WATCH

Video: [A Fox and a Mouse](#) (6:23). A lonesome fox hunts a mouse—and their relationship evolves as two owls begin to interfere with the hunt!

Discuss:

- What is the relationship between the fox and mouse like at the beginning, and what is it like at the end?
- What caused the relationship to change?
- What does this tell you about how friendships start?
- Share an example of a friendship that initially grew out of a very different relationship.

Video: [Same, Same but Different](#) (3:13). These pen pals living in different parts of the world become best friends after realizing they have so much in common.

Discuss:

- What do you think "same, same but different" means?
- What examples of "same, same but different" can you think of among yourselves?
- How can "same, same but different" strengthen a friendship?

READ / LISTEN

Read-aloud book: [Four Feet Two Sandals](#) (8:20) ([PDF](#)) by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed

Discuss:

- What is friendship? How can you be a true friend?
- Sometimes being a friend means giving up something that is important to you. How do Lina and Feroza show their friendship for each other?
- Lina and Feroza share their sandals. What else do they share with each other?

Song: ["You've Got a Friend"](#) by James Taylor (see [lyrics](#))

Discuss:

- What qualities of a friend does James Taylor highlight? What can you do to be a good friend?

Read-aloud book: [Be a Friend](#) (1:35) by Salina Yoon

Discuss:

- What small gifts do Dennis and Joy give to each other?
- Do you think they always knew they were giving these gifts?



Programs Overview + Impact

What is ThinkGive?

ThinkGive offers action-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs that foster a classroom culture of kindness and inclusion. Our unique experiential learning cycle encourages students to consider other perspectives, make meaningful connections, and cultivate the belief they can positively impact their own lives and the lives of others.

Four Key Components:

- **THINK:** The curriculum centers around a set of directives for giving.
- **GIVE:** Students take self-directed action to impact themselves and others.
- **REFLECT:** Students connect their actions with concepts discussed in class.
- **SHARE:** Students use an online Team Page to collaborate with and learn from peers.



The Student Experience

ThinkGive is about self-discovery and understanding the positive effects of giving of yourself. Teachers provide guidance and encouragement, but students own their experience. They see their actions making a difference and gain agency in building kind and inclusive communities.

1



IN-CLASS CURRICULUM

Teachers introduce a giving prompt and lead discussions and activities guided by ThinkGive's curriculum. The class explores concepts like empathy and social justice, and they think about who they are and who they want to be.

2

STUDENTS GIVE

Each student decides how to give and who to give to inspired by the in-class prompt. They experience the impact their words and actions have on others, and discover how good it feels to be kind.



3



RECORD + REFLECT

Students record their gift on the ThinkGive portal. Reflective questions help them connect their individual actions to the broader concepts discussed in class.

4

ENGAGE + SHARE

Students engage with, share with, and learn from their peers on the Team Page. This collaborative component promotes digital citizenship in a secure teacher-monitored space.



5

DISCUSSION + COLLABORATION

Collaboration comes alive in the classroom with group discussion and reflection. The student experience comes full circle as they capture key learnings before setting out on the next giving prompt.



Our Curriculum

The curriculum consists of a set of directives for giving (prompts). The list below provides examples of prompts in our elementary and middle school programs. Each prompt is accompanied by a 30-minute lesson plan containing activities, videos, discussion questions, and extensions that allow educators to adjust the lessons based on the needs of their students. Standard program lengths are 12 or 16 lessons; but educators can adjust the schedule to meet their needs.

Curriculum prompts (sample)

ThinkGive elementary

Give to yourself
Give to family
Give to a friend
Give your gratitude
Give to a student in another grade
Give to your community
Surprise someone
Give to someone you admire
Give to the environment
Give to someone you've never met

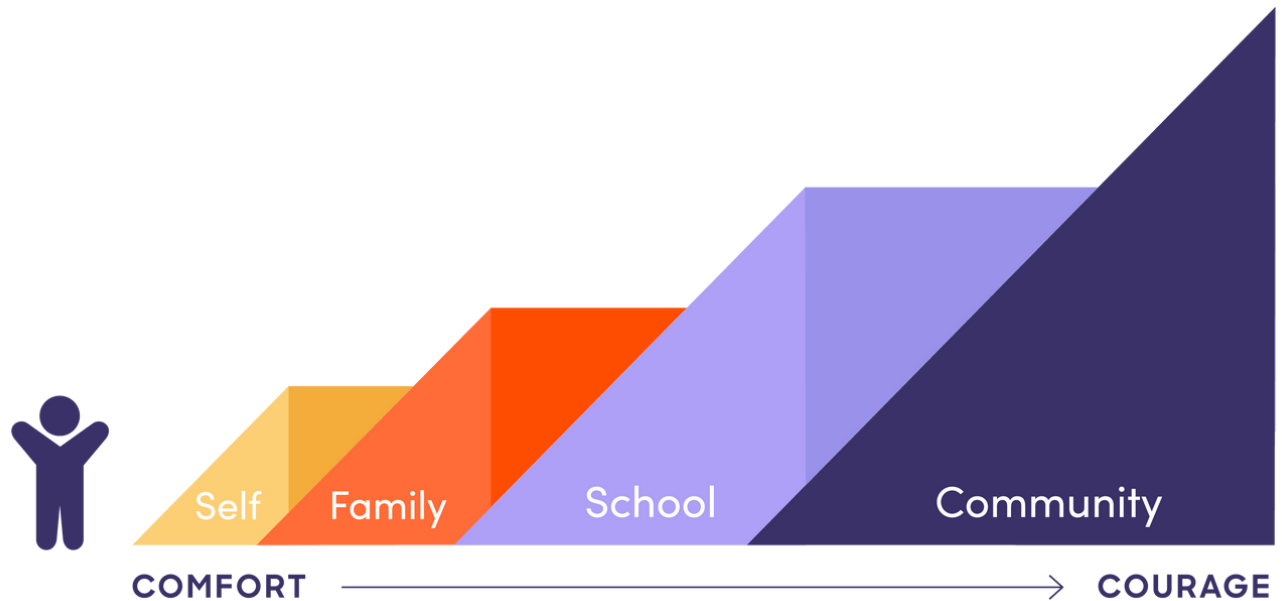
Curriculum prompts (sample)

ThinkGive middle school

Connect with yourself
Give to a friend
Give to a student outside your friend group
Challenge an assumption
Really see someone
Share your story
Give an invitation
Connect with a peer you'd like to get to know
Support a cause that personally affects you
Support a cause as an ally
Challenge a limiting belief

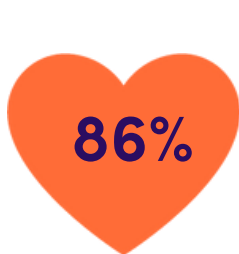
Why Use ThinkGive?

As the program progresses, students are challenged to step further into their courage zones. They build a strong sense of self and learn to lead with empathy and kindness.



Student Impact

ThinkGive empowers young people by giving them agency to discover their capacity to be upstanders and changemakers in their schools and communities.



Will be kinder
to others



Feel more connected to
teachers and peers



Will be a force
of good



Willing to stand up
for what's right

"ThinkGive made me recognize how I treat others, how they treat me, and how I treat myself." – 7th grader