



Brightening Days: At a glance (grades 4/5)

Welcome to ThinkGive!

This packet of materials is designed to give you an overview of our Brightening Days program (grades 4/5). Students explore empathy and the power of small actions in brightening others' (and their own) days. There is an increased focus on bravery when giving, stepping into the courage zone. Students focus on taking action and effecting change in their broader school community.

Included in this packet:

- Scope + Sequence (12 lessons / 16 lessons)
- Sample Lesson Plan (Share with someone)
- Program Overview + Impact

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



Scope + Sequence: ThinkGive Elementary, Brightening Days (grades 4/5)

Students focus on kindness and the power of small actions in brightening others' (and their own) days. The idea of empathy is introduced.

There is more of a focus on bravery when giving, stepping into the courage zone.

Students affect change in their class and school communities; as the program progresses they begin looking outward to their broader communities.

Lesson name	Lesson Summary	Students will Examine	Central Quote	ThinkGive Three	Themes
* Note: rows in grey are not included in the 12-prompt program					
Introduction	Students will be introduced to ThinkGive and the fundamental importance of kindness. The central theme of brightening a person's day will be explored by building a sun and sunbeams (kind actions) out of paper on the wall. Students will be introduced to the idea of empathy and its importance to meaningful giving. They will begin to understand the power of their actions in creating change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What constitutes a "gift." - The importance of empathy in taking meaningful action. - How their actions can impact their world. 	<i>"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."</i> – Martin Luther King Jr.	N/A	Empathy Kindness Self-awareness Self-care
Give to yourself	Students will identify ways that they already care for their bodies and their emotions. The focus then shifts to the power of positive self-talk. Students will use a worksheet to practice clearing clouds from their sky using their words and thoughts. The lesson will help them understand that caring for their emotional and physical well-being will prepare them to give bravely to others throughout the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ways they already – and can start to – look after their emotional and physical selves to brighten their own days. - The power of positive and negative self-talk. - How to use the ThinkGive Three to give to themselves and others. 	<i>"Be careful how you are talking to yourself because you are listening."</i> – Lisa M. Hayes	TRUE	Self-awareness Self-care Self-reflection
Give to a member of your family	Students will consider how they define family, and who they consider family. They will discuss and focus on the uniqueness of families and how diverse families impact our identities and help strengthen communities. Finally, they consider the importance of empathy in perspectives-taking and connection with family – and how having empathy for family members prevents us from taking family members for granted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How family structures vary, and how families are different and diverse. - How their families impact their identity. - The importance of using empathy to connect with family members. 	<i>"Families are like branches on a tree. We grow in different directions, yet our roots remain the same."</i> – Unknown	TRUE	Connection Diversity Empathy Identity Perspectives
Give to a friend	Students will explore the qualities of strong, meaningful friendships. During the discussion, focus on the differences among the students and how a diverse group of friends provides various perspectives. Focus also on the importance of empathy in a friendship in understanding what a friend feels and needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The qualities of good friends. - The value of diverse friendships. - The importance of empathy in a friendship. 	<i>"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."</i> – Marcel Proust	SMALL	Connection Diversity Empathy Friendship
Give to someone older or younger than you	Students will learn how kindness and bravery coexist. As students discuss the different role play scenarios, encourage them to see how an empathetic action can be brave even if it's small and simple. As their action, students will do something to brighten the sky of someone older or younger than them in their school or larger community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The intersection of bravery and kindness. - How using empathy leads to authentic and impactful actions. - How kind actions strengthen communities. 	<i>"Make just one person happy each day and in forty years you will have made 14,600 people happy for a little time at least."</i> – Charles Wiley	BRAVE	Community Empathy Kindness Social courage
Give to community	Students will gain an understanding of the many communities they are a part of, and their impact on those communities. Focus on how differences/diversity unify and strengthen communities; and how we should celebrate diversity by supporting and uplifting others. Students will understand that a big change is made up of many small actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What communities they belong to. - How diversity strengthens a community. - How small actions can add up to create a larger change. 	<i>"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color."</i> – Maya Angelou	SMALL	Community Connection Diversity Social responsibility

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Give your gratitude	Students will consider who and what they are grateful for. Discuss the importance of being grateful as well as showing gratitude to others. Guide students towards understanding that the power of gratitude comes from looking both inwards and outwards in order to recognize what they appreciate in their lives; and that gratitude leads to having empathy for others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of having and showing gratitude. - The impact gratitude has on the giver and receiver. - How practicing gratitude makes us more empathetic to others. 	<i>"Gratitude turns what we have into enough."</i> – Melody Beattie	TRUE	Empathy Gratitude Self-reflection
Share with someone	Students will learn that sharing yourself can be a gift. They consider the differences and similarities between sharing and giving, and brainstorm the kinds of things – both tangible and intangible – they can share with others. Guide them to understand that sharing intangible things like time, compassion, and ideas are all meaningful gifts. The reading passage provides an opportunity to discuss inclusion and compassion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The differences and similarities between giving and sharing. - How sharing intangible gifts (sharing yourself) can brighten someone's day. - How sharing can create more inclusive/welcoming communities. 	<i>"The time you shared today is the time you will remember tomorrow."</i> – Nishan Panwar	TRUE	Connection Friendship Inclusion Social awareness
Give to an adult you admire	Students will discuss what adults they admire in their lives and why they admire them, distinguishing between skills and character traits. Students will then look inward and consider what admirable traits they possess, and how they can cultivate those traits. As their prompt action, students will brighten the day of one adult they admire from their school or larger communities by appreciating them in some way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adults they admire and why. - The difference between a character trait and a skill. - What admirable traits they possess; and what traits they might want to work to develop. 	<i>"I admire all the people that shine, even after all the storms they've been through."</i> – Anonymous	BRAVE	Connection Identity Self-awareness Social courage
Give to the environment	Students will take a big, abstract idea – the environment – and identify small ways to make an impact. The Earth Trivia activity will help them understand the expansiveness of the planet. The story One Plastic Bag will illustrate the impact of small solutions to addressing large issues. While brainstorming, spend time identifying environmental issues in order to help students generate small gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The vastness of our Planet Earth. - How empathy for members of our community inspires us to help our environment and work for justice. - Ways to generate small solutions to large environmental problems. 	<i>"We can't save the world by playing by the rules, because the rules have to be changed. Everything needs to change – and it has to start today."</i> – Greta Thunberg	SMALL	Community Empathy Social awareness Social justice Social responsibility
Surprise someone	Students will explore the positive impact of a surprise gift. It's less about the gift itself, and more about the intention behind it. A surprise makes someone feel cared for. Students will work in small groups to surprise someone in the school community. As an extra gift, they are also welcome to surprise someone else!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How surprising someone with a gift can impact both the receiver and the giver. - How a surprise is less about the gift itself and more about the intention behind it. - How having empathy will help make a surprise meaningful. 	<i>"Life is positively great and wonderful and exciting, and I can't wait to see what's behind the next corner and all the corners after that."</i> – Anonymous	TRUE	Community Empathy Kindness
Give to an acquaintance	Students will consider the various types of relationships they have in their school/communities – and the roles their acquaintances play. The video "Unsung Hero" should demonstrate both that paying attention to our surroundings offers many opportunities for brave kindness, and how giving to acquaintances impacts not only the recipients of the gifts, but the giver. Finally, be sure to discuss how acquaintances can become friends – and friends can become acquaintances!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How giving to an acquaintance can strengthen communities. - The differences between family, friends, and acquaintances. - How empathy is important when giving to acquaintances. 	<i>"Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody."</i> – Anonymous	BRAVE	Community Connection Kindness Social courage

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Lesson name	Lesson Summary	Students will Examine	Central Quote	ThinkGive Three	Themes
Give spontaneously	Students will discuss spontaneity in the context of giving; what it means to be aware of their surroundings (their school and larger communities) and take action in the moment. They will consider the role of empathy in being able to take impactful and compassionate action, and will practice using empathy in the scenario activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of noticing the world around them. - How to take action spontaneously to brighten others' skies. - The importance of using empathy both when noticing opportunities for giving and when taking compassionate action. 	<i>"I give best when I give from that deeper place; when I give simply, freely and generously, and sometimes for no particular reason. I give best when I give from my heart."</i> – Steve Goodier	BRAVE	Empathy Social awareness Social courage
Give to someone you've never met	This lesson encourages students to step further into their courage zone by giving to someone they've never met. Students consider who in their communities they don't know, and the importance of giving to those people. The idea of safe vs. unsafe strangers may be daunting and you may choose to discuss safe vs. unsafe <i>places</i> instead of focusing on people. Either way, steer the conversation in the direction of being brave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small is all! Small actions directed toward someone you haven't met can be powerful. - The importance of using empathy when giving to others we haven't yet met. - Places – comfortable and uncomfortable – where we encounter people we've never met. 	<i>"We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike."</i> – Maya Angelou	BRAVE	Connection Empathy Kindness Social courage
Expand your courage zone	Students reflect on the courage they may have needed when facing different experiences for the first time. Then author George Saunders will share a childhood opportunity for kindness that he missed – and regrets. Assure students that being brave in social situations is indeed challenging – but just like with any new experience they face, practicing taking action now in small moments will make it feel more comfortable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What bravery is and how it feels to be courageous. - How courage looks different for everyone. - How giving outside of their comfort zone can create change within them. 	<i>"Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness."</i> – Lucius Annaeus Seneca	BRAVE	Kindness Self-reflection Social courage
Wrap-up	This lesson is about reflection, celebrating the individual and collective impact of student actions during ThinkGive and developing ways to carry their learning forward. Students begin by watching a video that highlights the importance of awareness, presence, kindness, and bravery. Then they record and share their most memorable gift. Finally, they have a discussion that both looks back to consider why ThinkGive matters ("So What") as well as looks forward and brainstorms how they can keep ThinkGive going ("Now What").	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How ThinkGive affected their understanding of the impact of giving. - Ways the class brightened others' days. - How can they, as individuals and a class, keep ThinkGive going? 	<i>"I cannot do all the good that the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do."</i> – Jana Stanfield	N/A	Community Perspectives Self-reflection

Share with someone



grades 4/5



30 minutes

“The time you shared today is the time you will remember tomorrow.”
– Nishan Panwar

Lesson Summary

Students will learn that sharing yourself can be a gift. They consider the differences and similarities between sharing and giving, and brainstorm the kinds of things—both tangible and intangible—they can share with others. Guide them to understand that sharing intangible things like time, compassion, and ideas are all meaningful gifts. The reading passage provides an opportunity to discuss inclusion and compassion. The ThinkGive Three focus for this gift is on True.



MATERIALS

Story: [Save Me a Seat](#) by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks
Chart paper
Plain paper (1/student)
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Share with someone](#)
Jamboard: [Sharing](#)

Students will Examine

- The differences and similarities between giving and sharing.
- How sharing intangible gifts (sharing yourself) can brighten someone's day.
- How sharing can create more inclusive/welcoming communities.

SHARE

Group Share

Students form small groups. Share out about their experiences giving as well as gifts they saw posted on the Team Page.

Discuss:

- Who noticed a gift that might have required bravery?
- Who read about a gift that they were able to connect with? Did it give you an idea of a gift you can give?



TEACHER TIP

Students who feel dissatisfied with a gift or who did not give should focus on moving forward. The goal of ThinkGive is to build a habit of kindness and empathy.

THINK • GIVE

Explain that today the focus is on sharing. There are two kinds of things we can share: tangible things (you can see and touch) and intangible things (you can't see or touch). We're going to focus on sharing intangible things, because this kind of sharing can be very impactful. When you share something intangible, you are sharing yourself. You are connecting with someone and perhaps brightening their sky.

Discuss:

- What are the similarities between giving and sharing? What are the differences?
- What kinds of things can we share with others?

Record responses on chart paper / whiteboard / Jamboard: Sharing, sorting gifts into two columns: Tangible and Intangible. If needed, suggest intangible gifts like sharing one's time, ideas, perspective, and stories.

Read: Save Me a Seat (novel excerpt) by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks. For a shorter excerpt, read from the last line on page 5 to the end. The novel is about being new and fitting in, but this excerpt shows how sharing a smile makes the main character feel welcomed. As we learn about people with different cultural backgrounds, it's important to remember that every person is unique.

Discuss:

- What did Dillon share with Ravi, and what effect did it seem to have?
- What are some reasons Dillon may have smiled at Ravi?
- How do you think Ravi feels about his new classmates and teacher? What evidence do you have?
- What assumptions does the teacher make about Ravi? How do you know? Was the teacher being inclusive?
- How might the teacher have acted differently? What impact might that have had on the situation?
- Does Ravi seem accepting of Dillon – the only classmate who shares his heritage? What evidence do you have? Is Ravi's assumption fair?
- How does this story relate to social justice? How can being inclusive or non-judgemental help strengthen our communities?



VOCAB

Tangible: adj.; perceptible by touch.

Intangible: adj.; unable to be touched or grasped; not having physical presence.

★ DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Video: Private vs. Personal Information (1:36). When is it okay to share personal stories? Is it okay to share personal things about yourself and other people (names, photos, things you/they did) on the Internet? What do you think is okay to share online? Why is it important to consider the feelings of others when you share something online?

REFLECT

Give students a piece of blank paper. Fold it in half. On the top half they draw how they imagine Ravi's experience looked and felt up to the point

where Dillon smiled. On the bottom half they draw how they think Ravi felt after the shared smile. Students leave their papers on their desks and walk around to look at each other's work.

Discuss:

- What did you notice?
- Can you relate to this story or activity? How so?
- Was Dillon's gift personal? Do you think it was hard for him to share it?
- How does sharing impact our community? How does sharing create more welcoming/inclusive environments?
- Have you ever shared something and then regretted it? What made you regret it?
- Have you ever known you should share something but you didn't? What was the reason you didn't share?



TEACHER TIP

If students prefer, they can describe the two different scenes using words instead of drawing.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Take Action

Explain: For this prompt, share yourself in some intangible way with someone in the school and/or your larger communities.

Brainstorm

Students brainstorm. They might not be able to plan this gift, in fact this could be a great opportunity to practice giving spontaneously. However they can still think about ways they might be able and willing to share. Remind students that they don't have to give the gifts they brainstormed.

Things to Consider

- When you share, focus on being True (authentic). You might also need to be brave, so step into your courage zone!
- Does sharing with someone feel different than giving to someone?
- Think about the impact of your gift. Can you brighten someone's day by sharing yourself with them?

Closing Quote

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

"The time you shared today is the time you will remember tomorrow." – Nishan Panwar

- What does this quote mean to you?



THINKGIVE THREE

1. True: be authentic
2. Small: simple gifts have big impact
3. Brave: step into your courage zone



VOCAB

Spontaneous: adj.; acting on impulse; unplanned.






DIGGING DEEPER

Nishan Panwar is an Indian thinker and writer. His goal is to share inspiring ideas to brighten people's days.

Sample Gifts

- In class we were talking about family traditions, and I usually stay quiet because my family structure is so different from everyone else's. But today, I decided to share. After class, a boy that I barely know came up to me to tell me he had a similar story, and then he shared it! We now have this special connection and it feels nice.
- I decided to wear a kurta I got when I visited my family in India to a friends' birthday party. I know it's not "cool" but I like it and by wearing it I'm sharing who I really am with everyone.
- I posted a photo on Instagram of myself having breakfast. I was mad at my sister and grumpy and tired but I decided to post it because that's how I felt and I wanted to share that out.

Student Journal Questions

-  Write about a time someone shared something intangible with you.
-  How can feeling included encourage someone/you to share?
-  What emotions come about when you share something with someone? Explain why.

Extensions

DO

Personal Artifact Sharing

Prep: Read through the Edutopia article "Updating an Age-old Class Activity" ([PDF](#)) – the description, benefits, examples, and logistics of how to make 'show-and-tell' a culturally responsive and inclusive activity in your classroom. Prompt students to bring in photos of or actual artifacts that meaningfully represent their culture and who they are to be shared with the class.

Sharing Art

Students can create art for both prompts, or you can divide them up.

- DRAW SCENE 1: Imagine if nobody shared. What would the world look like? What are their expressions? What colors do you see in this image?
- DRAW SCENE 2: Imagine if everyone shared. What would this world look like? What are their expressions now? What colors do you see?

Discuss:

- What do you notice about the two scenes?
- How does sharing impact our community?

Extensions

WATCH

Read-aloud book: Drawn Together (9:32) by Minh Le

Discuss:

- Name 2-3 ways the grandson and grandfather were different from one another. Despite these differences, what were they able to share with one another?
- How can sharing with someone despite differences help build a stronger relationship between the two of you?
- Describe a time when you shared about yourself with someone and found a meaningful connection or similarity you didn't know existed before.

Video: Kid President Makes a New Friend (4:03)

Discuss:

- What did Donna and Kid President share in order to help each other feel more comfortable?
- Why does Kid President encourage you to "get awkward with it?"

READ / LISTEN

Article: "How Cliques Make Kids Feel Left Out" (PDF | [audio](#)) by KidsHealth

Options: read it aloud as a class, have students read by themselves or with a partner, or jigsaw the article in groups of 3-4.

Discuss/journal:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the article?
- Have you ever experienced cliques at school, during extracurricular activities, on sports teams, or other times you are around your peers? Describe your experience with them – were you on the inside or outside? How did that feel?
- Using some of the ideas in the 'What You Can Do' section, which one do you think would be the most effective in addressing cliques? Explain your reasoning.
- Make a list of the tangible and intangible things that are shared between circles of friends. How can sharing create more inclusive communities and reduce the possibility of harmful cliques forming?

Read-aloud book: A Helping Hand (13:10) by Payal Dhar

A story told through a progression of letters about a student's changing feelings towards a new student with a prosthetic arm.

Discuss:

- How does the author/mentor feel about the new student at the beginning? How and why does the author change?
- How does the mentor start to have empathy for the new student?



Program Overview + Impact

What is ThinkGive?

ThinkGive is an action-based social and emotional learning (SEL) program that fosters a culture of kindness and inclusion in classrooms. 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:

1. **THINK (in-class curriculum)**: Educators deliver curriculum to introduce concepts and lead discussions. Students are prompted to give according to specific themes that move them from giving to those in their comfort zone (self, friends, family) to those in their courage zone (acquaintances, community, etc.).
2. **GIVE (individual action)**: After each prompt, students take self-directed action impacting themselves and others.
3. **REFLECT (record gifts)**: Each student is assigned a personalized page on ThinkGive's student portal where they record their actions to connect them with concepts discussed in class.
4. **SHARE (class collaboration)**: Students engage with, share with, and learn from their peers on the secure teacher-monitored Team Page.



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 component for each grade consists of a set of directives for giving (prompts). The list below provide examples of our elementary and middle school prompts. Each 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. ThinkGive offers standard program lengths of 12 or 16 lessons; but the schedule is flexible to meet educator needs.

Curriculum prompts (sample) ThinkGive elementary

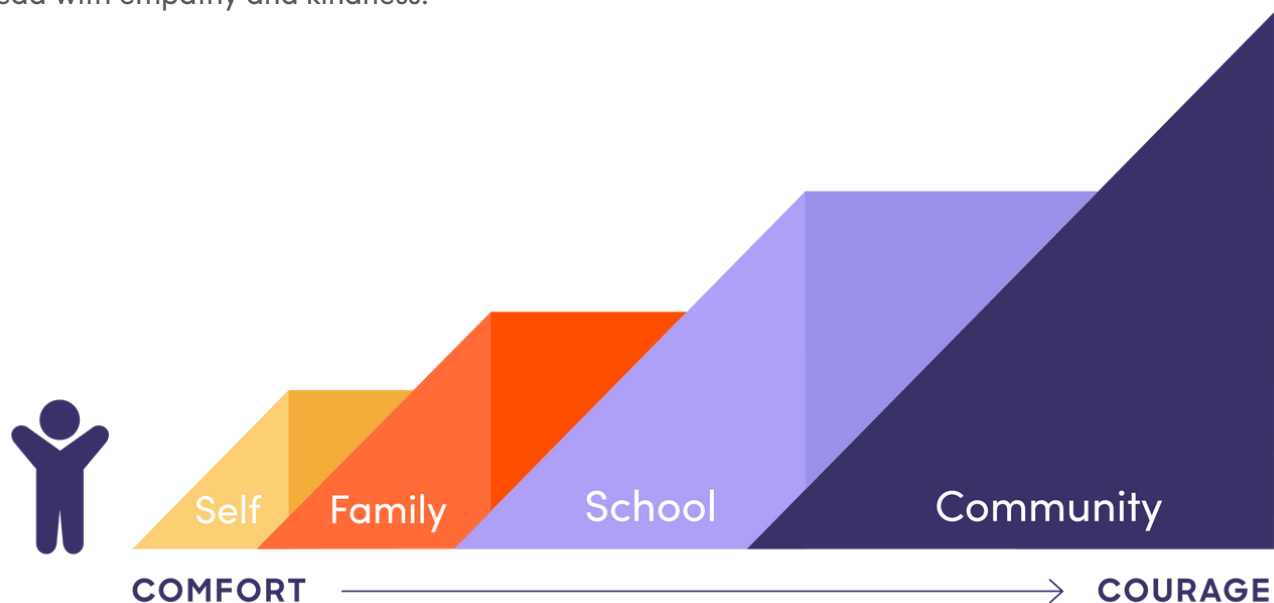
Give to yourself
Give to family
Give to a friend
Give your gratitude
Give to a student in another grade
Give to your community
Surprise someone
Give to someone you admire
Give to the environment
Give to someone you've never met

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, the prompts become more challenging; students are encouraged to step further and further into their courage zone. 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