



Social Justice Spotlight Elementary: At a glance

Welcome to ThinkGive!

This collection of resources offers a complete introduction to our Social Justice Spotlight Elementary program, which is recommended for students in grades 4-5. Students explore how their small actions—and inactions—impact themselves and others, learn about activists and the causes they fight for, and consider the importance, necessity, and effectiveness of taking collective action to have a more significant impact in supporting a cause. Then, they apply what they learned by taking consistent, small actions to promote change for social justice in their communities.

Included in this packet:

- Scope + Sequence (5 lessons)
- Sample Lesson Plan (Introduction)
- Program Overview

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Questions? info@thinkgiveproject.org

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

**Scope + Sequence: Social Justice Spotlight Elementary
(recommended for grades 4-5)**

Students explore how their small actions—and inactions—impact themselves and others, learn about activists and the causes they fight for, and consider the importance, necessity, and effectiveness of taking collective action to have a more significant impact in supporting a cause.
Then they apply what they learned by taking consistent, small actions to make change for social justice in their communities.

Lesson name	Lesson Summary	Students will Examine	Central Quote	Themes
Introduction	This lesson introduces the idea of social justice and encourages students to identify opportunities in their communities where they can take action to create a more just and equal society. Students use a KWL Chart to begin exploring ideas about social justice, then an activity to consider how social justice actions take varying amounts of time, energy, and courage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The definition of social justice. - Examples of social justice actions. - How social justice actions take varying amounts of time, energy, and courage—and how they all make a difference! 	<p><i>"When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something."</i></p> <p>– John Lewis</p>	Self-management: Personal agency Responsible decision-making: Critical thinking Responsible decision-making: Advocacy
Small Actions Toward Justice	Students learn how their small actions—and inactions—impact themselves and others. They role-play three versions of the same scenario to explore the consequences of inaction versus action. The ThinkGive Three emphasizes the power of small and brave acts of kindness in helping achieve social justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The power of actions—and inactions. - How kindness and bravery often go hand in hand. - How small and brave actions are steps towards social justice. 	<p><i>"What I regret most in my life are failures of kindness. Those moments when another human being was there, in front of me, suffering. And I responded, sensibly, reservedly, mildly."</i></p> <p>– George Saunders</p>	Self-management: Personal agency Relationship skills: Allyship Responsible decision-making: Advocacy
Amplify Activism	Students learn about activists—how they supported causes that mattered to them and the challenges they faced. Then, they choose a cause they care about and consider how to provide support by amplifying the efforts others are already making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are various ways they can amplify activist efforts. - What are the challenges of amplifying activist efforts? - What is the value of amplifying activist efforts? 	<p><i>"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another."</i></p> <p>– Charles Dickens</p>	Social awareness: Interconnectedness Relationship skills: Interdependence Responsible decision-making: Advocacy
Collective Care	This lesson focuses on the importance, necessity, and effectiveness of taking collective action to have a more significant impact in supporting a cause. Students build on the previous lesson's brainstorming to create a plan for taking action as a group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The power of a collective. - How to work together as a class/group for social justice. - How social justice is about collective care. 	<p><i>"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."</i></p> <p>– Coretta Scott King</p>	Self-management: Personal agency Relationship skills: Collaboration Responsible decision-making: Critical thinking
Wrap-up	Students use the final column of the KWL Chart to reflect on everything they have learned during this Social Justice Spotlight. Then, they consider ways to continue taking social justice actions. It is important to remember that social justice actions can range in size and that small, consistent actions can make a significant difference in creating a fairer and safer world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What they've learned during this Spotlight. - What patterns exist in society, and how can they help break them? - How to continue noticing opportunities to show up for social justice. 	<p><i>"Freedom is incomplete without social justice."</i></p> <p>– Atal Bihari Vajpayee</p>	Self-awareness: Confidence Self-management: Personal agency Responsible decision-making: Critical thinking

Social Justice Spotlight

Introduction



grades 4/5



35 minutes

“When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up.
You have to say something; you have to do something.”
– John Lewis

Lesson Summary

This lesson introduces the idea of social justice and encourages students to identify opportunities in their communities where they can take action to create a more just and equal society. Students use a KWL Chart to begin exploring ideas about social justice, then an activity to consider how social justice actions take varying amounts of time, energy, and courage.

Students will Examine

- The definition of social justice.
- Ways to identify opportunities to make a difference in their communities.
- The importance of consistent, small actions to make change.

Pre-Activity Prep

- Print the KWL Chart ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (1/student) or prepare chart paper (THINK.GIVE section).
- (Optional) Print the Worksheet: Social Justice Actions Come in All Sizes ([PDF](#)) (1/student) or prepare chart paper (1/group) (REFLECT section).
- (Optional) Print or digitally share the Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (1/student) (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

ThinkGive Journals
 Student Journal Guide ([PDF](#))
 KWL Chart ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))
 Chart paper
 Worksheet: Social Justice
 Actions Come in All Sizes ([PDF](#))
 Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Introduction](#)
 Video: [How to Change The World](#)
 ([a work in progress](#)) (3:43)

SHARE

Nothing for the Introduction, no actions to share yet!

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Explain: Today, we are starting a project called ThinkGive. The project's central idea is that taking positive action to impact others—noticing others, understanding others, and including others—creates a better world. Let's see what Kid President has to say about this topic.

Watch: [How to Change the World \(a work in progress\)](#) (3:43). Kid President explores people's ideas about improving the world.

Discuss:

- What changes our world for the better?
- What are some actions we can take to improve the world?

Hand out or digitally share the [KWL Chart \(PDF | Google\)](#) (1/student) or use chart paper and develop a collective KWL Chart throughout the program. Complete the first two columns as a group (below); students will complete the third in another lesson.

Ask: What do you know about social justice?

As students respond, they add their and others' ideas to the first column on their KWL Chart (or add ideas to the first column on the collective KWL Chart).

Ask: What do you want to know about social justice? What do you wonder about it?

As students respond, they add their and others' ideas to the second column on their KWL Chart (or add ideas to the second column on the collective KWL Chart).

Explain: During this Social Justice Spotlight, we'll start recognizing opportunities in our communities where we can take action to create a world that is equal and fair to everyone.

DIGGING DEEPER

- What does power have to do with making positive change?
- What does power have to do with social justice?
- To what extent does power, or the lack of power, affect people?
- Some assume that young people don't have much power. What do you think?



SOCIAL JUSTICE

noun; the idea that everyone deserves equal rights, fair opportunities, and to feel respected, valued, and safe.

REFLECT

Suggested time: 15 minutes

What does Social Justice Look Like in Action?

Explain: Just like Kid President said, “The world is changed by ordinary people. Little people living out big love!” There are many ways of taking action for social justice. Every social justice action we take requires a different amount of time, energy, and courage—but they ALL have a positive impact. Let's categorize different social justice actions into small, medium, or large categories according to the amount of time, energy, and bravery they might take us to do.

Show slides 8-19. For each, students decide the size of the action (the amount of time, energy, and bravery that action would demand of them) and explain their reasoning.

Explain: Social justice is the idea that everyone deserves equal rights and fair opportunities and feels respected, valued, and safe. Unfortunately, there are many social injustices in our society. There is a lot that needs fixing! Social justice might feel like a big idea, but all change happens through small, consistent actions. We all have the power to take small actions to create positive change in our communities.

Students form pairs or small groups. Hand out the [Worksheet: Social Justice Actions Come in All Sizes \(PDF\)](#) (1/student) or have students write their ideas on chart paper. Together, they brainstorm actions for social justice that require small, medium, and large amounts of time, energy, and courage.

CONNECT + CLOSE

ThinkGive Three (Optional)

Introduce students to the ThinkGive Three, a guide for how to give. Every prompt will revisit these ideas so students can incorporate them into their thinking. Hang a [ThinkGive Three Poster \(Yellow PDF | Purple PDF\)](#) in your class to remind you throughout the program.

1. TRUE. Be your authentic self in your actions and words.
2. SMALL. Small is all! Everything we do and say matters, and everything we do and say has an impact—no matter how small.
3. BRAVE. Step into your courage zone; challenge yourself to be brave with your actions and words.

★ THINKGIVE THREE

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

Take Action

Explain: Between now and our next ThinkGive session [give date], notice social justice actions of all sizes happening in your communities. Who is taking action? What actions do they take? Do you notice situations where action is needed, but nobody steps up?

Things to Consider

- Social justice starts with small actions.
- Taking action for social justice requires varying amounts of time, energy, and courage for each individual.
- Social justice makes the world a better place.

Closing Quote

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

“When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something.” – John Lewis

- Who do you know who speaks up or takes action when they see things that aren’t fair or right?

★ TEACHER TIP

Consider integrating the ThinkGive Three into the Things to Consider, which mentions focusing on small acts of kindness.

★ CONNECTION

John Lewis (1940–2020) was an American politician and civil rights activist. He was the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) from 1963 to 1966 and helped organize the 1963 March on Washington.

Reflection Questions

- 🗨️ What social justice action did you notice?
- 🗨️ How might this action make our world fairer and more equal?
- 🗨️ Is this an action you could take? Explain why or why not.

Student Journal

- 🗨️ If you could change one thing, what would you change and why?
- 🗨️ How do some social justice actions start with one person?
- 🗨️ Describe a time you took a social justice action on behalf of another person.
- 🗨️ Why can it be hard to take social justice actions?

Social Justice Spotlight: Elementary

Schedule, Curriculum Overview + Web Training

LESSON 1

THINK: Lesson: Introduction (35 minutes)

Students will examine:

- The definition of social justice.
- Examples of social justice actions.
- How social justice actions take varying amounts of time, energy, and courage—and how they all make a difference!

GIVE: Students take action!

REFLECT + SHARE: Students and educators record their actions on the ThinkGive website, respond to reflection questions, and collaborate with peers on the Team Page.

How to use the ThinkGive Portal

- 1 LOGIN:** Go to www.thinkgiveproject.org. Click LOGIN button, top right. Enter your username and password. Bookmark the page!
- 2 EDIT PROFILE:** You will land on your MY PAGE. Personalize your page. Click EDIT PROFILE to upload a profile image, write about yourself, and choose your color.
- 3 POST YOUR ACTION:** : Click on POST A GIFT. Answer the reflective questions and SUBMIT.

LESSON 2

THINK: Lesson: Small Actions Toward Justice (35 minutes)

Students will examine:

- The power of actions—and inactions.
- How kindness and bravery often go hand in hand.
- How small and brave actions are steps towards social justice.

GIVE: Students take action!

REFLECT + SHARE: Students and educators record their actions on the ThinkGive website, respond to reflection questions, and collaborate with peers on the Team Page.



LESSON 3

THINK: Lesson: Amplify Activism (35 minutes)

Students will examine:

- There are various ways they can amplify activist efforts.
- What are the challenges of amplifying activist efforts?
- What is the value of amplifying activist efforts?

GIVE: Students take action!

REFLECT + SHARE: Students and educators record their actions on the ThinkGive website, respond to reflection questions, and collaborate with peers on the Team Page.

LESSON 4

THINK: Lesson: Collective Care (35 minutes)

Students will examine:

- The power of a collective.
- How to work together as a class/group for social justice.
- How social justice is about collective care.

GIVE: Students take action!

REFLECT + SHARE: Students and educators record their actions on the ThinkGive website, respond to reflection questions, and collaborate with peers on the Team Page.

LESSON 5

THINK: Lesson: Wrap-Up (30 minutes)

Students will examine:

- What they've learned during this Spotlight.
- What patterns exist in society, and how can they help break them?
- How to continue noticing opportunities to show up for social justice.

REFLECT + SHARE: Students and educators record their actions on the ThinkGive website, respond to reflection questions, and collaborate with peers on the Team Page.



The Student Experience

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 visit their Team Page to engage with, share with, and learn from their peers. 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.





How to Maximize Program Impact



The ThinkGive cycle is designed to make the program manageable for you and predictable for students. You'll cycle through all four components with each lesson so that students can discuss important ideas and take brave action to affect change.

Promote Student Agency

ThinkGive is all about empowering youth to own their actions. With each action, students decide what to give and who to give to. They realize that their words matter, their choices matter, and they matter.

Students will also experience the topics covered in our lessons differently. We encourage you to give students options in how they wish to participate. Directives within lessons should feel like an invitation to join a discussion/activity with students; should they want to share their knowledge and learning with their classmates in different ways, great!

The ThinkGive Three

ThinkGive isn't about the gifts but the journey taken while giving. Students empathize with other perspectives, explore their capacity for affecting change, and consider what kind of person they want to be. The ThinkGive Three provides a framework for students to use when taking action. Be sure to reinforce these as you go!

- 1 TRUE.** Be your authentic self in your actions and words.
- 2 SMALL.** Small is all! Everything we do and say matters, and everything we do and say has an impact—no matter how small.
- 3 BRAVE.** Step into your courage zone; challenge yourself to be brave with your actions and words.

