

Give to a Friend



grade: 4



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 some time on the value of differences / diversity among friends in providing varying perspectives. Use the book *The Gift of Nothing* to explore the meaning of friendship and to question whether it is more people or things that make us happy.

Students will Examine

- The qualities of meaningful friendships.
- What makes someone a good friend?
- How differences between friends can strengthen a friendship.



MATERIALS

Chart paper
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Give to a friend](#)
Read-aloud book: [The Gift of Nothing](#) (2:27)
Jamboard: [Carousel on Friendship](#)

SHARE

Maître d'

Call out: Table for (number 2-5)

- Students gather in groups based on the number called out, and share their gifts.
- Call out another number. Students form new groups and share their gifts. Continue for a few rounds.

Discuss:

- Did you notice ways that you take your family for granted?
- How was your gift True (authentic)?
- Did your gift create a ripple?



TEACHER TIP

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

THINK • GIVE

Carousel on Friendship

- Post 4–5 large sheets of paper around the room. On each paper, write a different question or statement from the options below. Option: use Jamboard: [Carousel on Friendship](#).
- Divide students into teams, and give each team a different colored marker. Each group begins at one of the posted questions and writes their points.
- After a minute or two, groups rotate. Students should read through what the other group(s) wrote and, if they wish, agree with (checkmark) or add to the comment. Then students post their own additional thoughts.
- Continue rotating until all groups have responded to every question. Then facilitate a class discussion.

Question / statement options (choose 4-5):

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

★ DIGGING DEEPER

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

★ CONNECTION

Students write an acrostic poem about friendship and what it means to them.

REFLECT

Watch: [The Gift of Nothing](#) (2:27) by Patrick McDonnell (read-aloud book). Explores the meaning of friendship and the meaning of gifts. Discuss how things might not be what make us happy; perhaps it is people and our relationships with them that really make us happy.

Discuss:

- Was Mooch being a good friend when he gave Earl nothing?
 - 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?
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CONNECT + CLOSE

Take Action

Look for opportunities to give to a friend in our class or school. Keep your eyes open for small moments when you can act and be a Daymaker for a friend. Give bravely and create wide ripples that spread to other friends in our community!

Brainstorm

- Can you acknowledge a friend in our class/school you've taken for granted?
- Can you appreciate a friend in our class/school who has helped you?
- Can you recognize a new friend in our class/school?
- Can you notice how friends in our class/school 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 in your class/school might want, need, or enjoy.
- Create a ripple effect within your class or school!

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: simple gifts have big impact
3. Brave: step into your courage zone



VOCAB

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



CONNECTION

Video: [ThinkGive: Advice from ThinkGive Graduates \(3:53\)](#). Features ThinkGive students who have some advice for students about to start ThinkGive. Show it at any point in the program!







DIGGING DEEPER

Shel Silverstein was an author, cartoonist, and musician, making him a very talented man! Silverstein is best known for children literature and poems.

Sample Gifts

- Today I noticed how I have been taking all my friends for granted. So I told my friends how thankful I am to have them.
- I gave an apology to a friend who I had a disagreement with.
- I gave a gift to one of my friends by sitting with them 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

-  Do you consider yourself a good friend? 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

Paper Plate or Friendship Chain

Give each student a paper plate and a marker. They write a word on the plate in large letters that they feel embodies the most important quality of a good friend (e.g. honesty, humor, kindness, trustworthiness). Students share their word with the group and explain their choice. They should consider if they have ever taken that quality in their friend for granted. Display the plates in the room.

Note: You could choose to use strips of paper instead of plates and turn them into a "Friendship Chain" that can be hung up in the room.

WATCH

Video: [The Friends of Kwan Ming](#) (7:06)

This animated short tells the story of Kwan Ming, a man who left China to live and work in the New World. When opportunities for work finally arise, Kwan Ming lets his three friends have the best jobs and takes a lowly position as helper to a mean storeowner. But his generosity pays off when his friends help him with a difficult task.

- How can friends help us when we're feeling alone?
- Do friends need to agree on everything?
- Do friends need to have similar interests or act in similar ways?

Extensions

WATCH

Song: “You’ve Got a Friend” by James Taylor (see [lyrics](#))

- What qualities of a friend is James Taylor highlighting?
- What can you do to be a good friend?

READ / LISTEN

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

- What is friendship? How can you be a true friend?
- Sometimes being a friend means having to give 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?

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

- Why did the fence stretch through the town? What does the fence represent?
- Are there many kinds of fences?
- 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 did Sandra say no when Annie wanted to join the jump rope game, but agreed to let Annie join them later that summer when she was with Clover?

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

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