

Gratitude Spotlight

Introduction



grades 4-5



30 minutes

“When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself.”
– Tecumseh

Lesson Summary

Students explore the idea of gratitude by reading an ode to shoes and considering how they can appreciate something they might usually take for granted. They then choose an everyday object they often overlook and write an ode to it. They finish the lesson by reflecting on the importance of feeling gratitude.

Students will Examine

- What gratitude means.
- How does noticing come before gratitude?
- What are the small things they can be grateful for around them?

Pre-Activity Prep

- Print the ThinkGive Journal cover template ([PDF](#)) (1/student).
- Choose which ode to project (“Ode to Pablo’s Tennis Shoes” ([PDF](#)) or “Ode to My Shoes” ([PDF](#))) (THINK.GIVE section).
- Print the Worksheet: My Ode ([PDF](#)) (1/student) (THINK.GIVE section).
- (Optional) Print or digitally share the Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

ThinkGive Journals
 Student Journal Guide ([PDF](#))
 ThinkGive Journal cover template ([PDF](#))
 Poem: “Ode to Pablo’s Tennis Shoes” ([PDF](#))
 Poem: “Ode to My Shoes” ([PDF](#))
 Worksheet: My Ode ([PDF](#))
 Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Introduction](#)
 (Digging Deeper) Video: [Gratitude](#) (5:22)

SHARE

Nothing for the Introduction, no actions to share yet!

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 15–20 minutes

Read an Ode!

Read one of the following poems:

- “Ode to Pablo’s Tennis Shoes” ([PDF](#)) by Gary Soto
- “Ode to My Shoes” ([PDF](#)) by Francisco X. Alcarón

Discuss:

- Why would someone write an ode to their shoes?
- What does the poem say about shoes?
- How does the author feel about his shoes? How do you know?

We can feel grateful for many things, people, and experiences. As a class, brainstorm a list of 10–20 everyday objects (e.g., foods, clothing, furniture) to show the breadth of what people can be grateful for.

Activity: Write an Ode!

Hand out the [Worksheet: My Ode \(PDF\)](#) (1/student). Students choose one item from the list (or a different object) and use Side 1 of the worksheet to consider characteristics of, uses for, and their appreciation of their chosen item. They are then ready to write an ode to their object on Side 2 of the worksheet. They can use any form and length.

(Optional) Students share their odes with partners, in small groups, or with the class. After each student shares, ask them to reflect aloud on the discussion questions below. If not sharing, discuss the questions as a class.

Discuss:

- How did you decide on the object that you chose?
- Which object(s) on the list did you feel unable to write an ode to? Explain.
- Did you find it challenging to write an ode to your object? Why or why not?
- As you wrote your ode, did you see your object differently? If so, how?
- What did you learn about the object in your ode?

DIGGING DEEPER

Students use the guiding questions below to research their object. They can create a poster, write a paragraph, or choose another way to share what they learn.

Guiding Questions: When and where was this object invented? Why was this object invented? How is this object made?

Discuss:

- How did learning more about your object impact your appreciation?
- How can learning about everyday objects change how you view them?



ODE

noun; a lyric poem, typically one in the form of an address to a particular subject, written in varied or irregular meter.



TEACHER TIP

For students who might not connect well with poetry, offer alternative ways to appreciate their chosen object (e.g., drawing, writing a song, or listing qualities).

REFLECT

What is Gratitude?

Ask: What does gratitude mean? Or, what is an example of when you might feel grateful?

Ideas to add to the discussion:

- When we appreciate something or someone fully, we practice gratitude.
- We can feel grateful for anything!
- We feel more gratitude if we notice the world around us.
- Feeling grateful can improve our mood.

Discuss:

- Did you feel gratitude towards your object when writing your ode? How did you express your gratitude?
- What does gratitude feel like? Where do you feel gratitude in your body?
- Why is it important to practice feeling and expressing gratitude?

DIGGING DEEPER

Watch: [Gratitude](#) (5:22). This short film explores gratitude for the small things around us.

Discuss:

- What does this quote mean to you: "Today. It's a gift."?
- How does this film change your perspective about being grateful for every day?



GRATITUDE

noun; the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

CONNECT + CLOSE

ThinkGive Three (Optional)

Introduce students to the ThinkGive Three, a guide for how to take action. 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 serve as a reminder 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.

Take Action

Explain: Between now and our next ThinkGive session [give date], notice and appreciate people, objects, or experiences that you might ordinarily overlook. Consider what your gratitude feels like in your body.



THINK.GIVE THREE

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

Things to Consider

- We have many things to be grateful for, and we don't always take the time to appreciate them.
- When we take time to notice something, we are better able to appreciate it.
- Paying attention to what we're grateful for makes us even more grateful!

Closing Quote

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




"When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself." –
Tecumseh

- Why might we "see no reason for giving thanks"? How can we change our mindset so that we do see a reason for giving thanks?
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Reflective Questions

- What is something you noticed that you might ordinarily overlook? What did you appreciate about it?
- How did you feel in your body when you appreciated the object, person, or experience?
- Why is noticing and appreciating people, objects, and experiences beneficial?

Journal Questions

-  What does gratitude mean to you?
-  What, if anything, did you learn from hearing what others are grateful for?
-  How can pausing to notice something affect our mood?