

Give to a Friend



grade: 5



30 minutes

“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”
– Marcel Proust

Lesson Summary

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. Finally, guide students in considering what it is about a small gift that will make it meaningful.

Students will Examine

- The qualities of good friends.
- The value of diverse friendships.
- The importance of empathy in a friendship.



MATERIALS

Paper plates (1/student)
Markers
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Give to a friend](#)
Jamboard: [What is a Friend?](#)
Video: [The Animal Odd Couple](#) (2:44)

SHARE

Maître d'

- Call out: Table for (number 2-5). Students gather in small groups based on the number called out and share their gifts.
- Call out another number. Students form new groups and share their own gifts as well as a gift that sounded True and Small.



TEACHER TIP

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

THINK • GIVE

Explain that for today's prompt, we're going to focus on friends. Think of all your friends – in this class, at school, and in your other communities (sports teams, clubs, church, etc.)

What is a Friend?

Give each student a paper plate and a marker. Students write a word in large letters that they feel embodies the most important quality of a good friend (e.g. honest, funny, kind, empathetic, trustworthy).

Note: You could use strips of paper instead of plates and turn them into a friendship chain.

Students share their word with the class and explain why they chose it. Display the plates in the room.

Discuss (choose a few questions) or use Jamboard: [What is a Friend?](#):

- Why are friends important?
- What does it mean to be a good friend?
- Why is it important to have friends from diverse backgrounds with different interests?
- Why is empathy important in a friendship? How does having empathy prevent us taking a friend for granted?
- Do you think that being a friend is easy? Why or why not? What is your responsibility as a friend?
- How can you be a good friend? What are some things you can do to brighten a friend's day?

★ DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

What are some differences between making a friend in person and online? Are there times when you might say or do things with your friends online that you might not say or do in person? If so, why?



VOCAB

Diverse: adj.; showing a great deal of variety; very different.



TEACHER TIP

This is a great opportunity to discuss friendships including diverse interests, backgrounds, and personalities, and will prime students for a deeper discussion after watching "The Animal Odd Couple" (REFLECT section).

REFLECT

Watch: [The Animal Odd Couple](#) (2:44), CBS News. This video is about a unique friendship between two animals named Bella and Tara. As students watch, they should think about what these two animals can teach us about friendship. Challenge students to spot the small, intangible gifts the animals give each other.

Discuss:

- No one expected Bella and Tara to become friends because of their differences. How does this video impact your understanding of who a friend can be?



TEACHER TIP

Let your students lead the conversation, but be sure to hit on the value of diverse friendships.

- What gifts do Bella and Tara give each other? Are the gifts small? Do they matter, or is it the intention behind the gifts?
- How do Bella and Tara exhibit empathy for each other?
- What can we learn about friendship from Bella and Tara? What about empathy and friendship?
- How does this friendship impact the humans at the nature preserve?

CONNECT + CLOSE

Take Action

For this prompt, notice opportunities to give a small (and true) gift to a friend. This can be a friend in class, at school, or in another community.

Brainstorm

Students brainstorm. Remind students that they don't have to give the gifts they have brainstormed. [Questions to help:](#)

- Is there a friend who would appreciate your gratitude?
- Have you taken a friend for granted recently?
- Have you made a new friend you'd like to recognize?
- Could you offer help to a friend in need?

Things to Consider

- The ThinkGive Three focus is on Small. Small gifts can go a long way in strengthening a friendship!
- Try to use empathy to consider what a friend might want, need, or enjoy.
- What action can you take that might brighten a friend's sky?

Closing Quote

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

"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."

– Marcel Proust

- What does this quote mean to you?
- Who in your life makes you happy?

★ THINKGIVE THREE

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

★ 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

Marcel Proust (1871–1922) was a French novelist who wrote the longest novel ever written called *In Search of Lost Time*. It took him 13 years to write – it's almost 4,000 pages and has 1.2 million words!

Sample Gifts

- I apologized 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.
- 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.

Student Journal Questions

- How can friendships with people from backgrounds different to ours make us more understanding and kind?
- What are some things you have learned from your friends? How did you learn them?
- What are the ways that you can develop or strengthen friendships?
- Write about a friendship that you admire – and what you admire about it.

Extensions

DO

Friendship Thesaurus

Individually, or in pairs, students create original synonyms for the word friendship (or other friendship-based words such as funny, brave, true, kind, honest). They make a definition, a part of speech, and use it in a sentence. Turn them into posters or a digital slideshow!

WATCH

Video: [Best Friends from around the World](#) (2:41). Friendship looks very similar no matter your age or nationality.

- What qualities are important in a friend?
- How does diversity enhance friendship?

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

- What qualities of a friend does James Taylor highlight?

Extensions

READ / LISTEN

Read-aloud book: My Two Blankets (4:55) by Irena Kobald and Freya Blackwood

- What do you immediately learn about the narrator? What is her experience?
- Why does she feel so alone?
- What kindness does the girl give the narrator?
- The narrator is learning from the girl; what do you think the girl is learning from the narrator?
- How do her blankets connect with her identity?

Read-aloud book: The Gift of Nothing (2:27) by Patrick McDonnell. Highlights that we can all find small and true gifts for a friend.

- Mooch gives Earl “nothing” – but what is his actual gift?
- How is his gift small but powerful?

Read-aloud book: A Sick Day For Amos McGee (3:52) by Philip C. Stead

- Would you say that Amos is friends with the animals? Why or why not?
- What qualities does Amos have that make him a kind person?
- Do you think that the animals took Amos’ visits for granted? Explain.
- Do you connect more with the animals or with Amos? Explain.
- Who do you take for granted in our school community?