

SEL Activity

School Community Helpers



grades 4-5



15 minutes

Objectives

- Students build community through gratitude.
- Students recognize and appreciate people they rarely interact with in their communities.

Essential Questions

- Who are the people in your community who help others?
- How can a small act of gratitude spread through a community?

Vocabulary

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

Community: noun; the people living in one area or considered a unit because of their shared interests, social group, or nationality.



MATERIALS

Lined paper/journal
Blank paper (for drawing)
Thank You card ([PDF](#))

SEL CORE COMPETANCIES

Social awareness
Communication
Relationship-building

Before you Begin

Print out Thank You cards ([PDF](#)) (1/student)

Program Connections

This activity has been modified from a lesson in our ThinkGive Elementary programs. To learn more, visit our [PROGRAMS](#) page.

THINK • GIVE

Write the following list of school community roles on the board. Add any other roles that are unique to your school community.

School community roles: Librarian, Nurse, Bus driver, Front Office staff, Substitute teachers, After-school teachers, Technology teacher/staff, Kitchen staff, Maintenance, Custodian, Crossing guard.

Discuss:

- Do you know the names of any people with those roles?
- Do you know how what they do helps the school?

Students (individually or in groups) choose one person from the list and spend a few minutes writing or drawing what the school might look like if their role didn't exist (e.g., What if our library had no librarian?).

Students share their words and/or drawings with the class.

Discuss:

- Why is it important to show appreciation to people who help our community run smoothly?
- Why might we sometimes forget to be grateful to people in our lives?

CONNECT + CLOSE

Gratitude Cards

Give students a sheet of blank paper or a Thank You card ([PDF](#)). Working individually, they write a note to at least one person on their list, thanking them for something they do for the community.

NOTE: Discuss the components of a meaningful thank you note: how it is specific and highlights the impact the person's work has on the community.

Discuss:

- How might this act of gratitude spread throughout our community?
- What can we do to remind ourselves to be grateful for people in our lives more often?

ACTION

Explain: Deliver your thank you note by hand, or leave it for the person to find. For an extra challenge, write another note to show appreciation for someone outside of your school community.

REFLECTION

Lead a discussion or allow students to journal. Use the following questions as a guide:

- Why should we show gratitude to people who help us?
- Why do we tend to forget to appreciate people in our lives?
- Who else in your life can you thank?