



Deliver Gratitude Day

Lesson Plan

Adapt this one-period **lesson plan** for any grade level and follow it with a simple and powerful **service project** on Giving Tuesday. The **reflection** brings learning and service impact together.

Anticipatory Set: (10 minutes)

Post this quote: "It is not happy people who are grateful; it is grateful people who are happy."

Ask students what they think of the quote. Define gratitude/grateful. According to the world's leading gratitude researcher Robert Emmons, gratitude is an "affirmation of goodness where we affirm that there are good things in the world."

Say, "We are going to use this information about gratitude to make someone happy today."

Part One: (10 minutes) What or who am I grateful for?

Watch one of these gratitude videos:

- K-5: Kid President: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yA5Qpt1JRE4>
- 5-12: The Gratitude Experiment: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHv6vTKD6lg>

1. Students quietly write a list of things and/or people they are grateful for.
2. Have students stand in two circles made up of the same number of people. One circle faces out, and the other circle faces them one to one. On your cue, they tell the person facing them one thing they are grateful for. Then the outer circle rotates clockwise, so everyone is facing someone new. Repeat several times - long enough for them to stretch themselves to think of new things, but not so long they lose interest.

Part Two: (10 minutes) Discuss quotes about gratitude.

Put the class into groups of 3-5. Copy the following quotes and give random quotes to each group of students. Give them five minutes to discuss and plan, and one minute each to teach their quote and its meaning to the rest of the class. They may act it out or give examples.

<p>"There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." - Albert Einstein</p>	<p>"None is more impoverished than the one who has no gratitude. Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy." - Fred De Witt Van Amburgh</p>
<p>"If you count all your assets, you always show a profit." - Robert Quillen</p>	<p>"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough." - Oprah Winfrey</p>

Share the [Science of Giving](#) on the white board and talk about the benefits of giving. Relate giving to gratitude - when someone gives to us, we feel gratitude, and when we give, we inspire gratitude in others.



Part Three: (10 minutes) Making a choice to make a difference

- Introduce the idea of opportunity cost: Taking voluntary action and giving has a cost to the giver, something they give up, which may be in time, money, effort, energy, or a missed opportunity.
- The cost of volunteering is simply something you have give up in order to help another person. Opportunity cost is "the next best alternative that must be given up when a choice is made. Not all alternatives, just the next best choice." For example, when you volunteer to clean up trash by the river, you may give up the opportunity to play soccer after school. When you spend time making advocacy messages for the Humane Society, the opportunity cost may be losing time connecting with friends on social media. Helping pass out water to runners at a marathon may cost the volunteer energy.
- Ask, "Are you willing to give up some time or energy to contribute to someone else's happiness?"
- Read the book *The Giving Tree*, by Shel Silverstein, to the class. Discuss what the tree gave up in personal cost. Lead the students to understand that you do not need money to help others. You can give up your time, efforts, talents, and attention to help others.
- Before taking action, the giver decides whether the benefits of giving time are greater than the opportunity cost.

Service Project

This service project may be started in class and completed in subsequent days, either with the class or with friends and family.

Project Overview: Students communicate gratitude to someone either in a letter or on social media. The gratitude contributes to the well-being of all.

Procedure: The planning and writing can happen in advance, and the "Gratitude Delivery" will be completed on Giving Tuesday.

- Explore the "GivingTuesday" website of the global initiative. The goal of #GivingTuesday is to encourage all people to give on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. GivingTuesday is the second biggest giving day of the year and it is fueled by social media. Plan a way to show gratitude on that day.
- Think about someone who you admire or appreciate (parent, grandparent, coach, teacher, friend, mentor, school staff, military member). What do you admire? What did they do to help you?
 - Write a thank you note and send it to them in the mail.
 - Write a sentence of gratitude for someone on a piece of paper, and take a picture of yourself holding it. Post it on social media with the hashtags #unselfie, #givingtuesday, #gratitude, and #teach1.
 - Leave sticky notes of encouragement throughout the building.
 - Deliver coffee and donuts to school staff, like lunch workers, bus drivers, and office staff.
 - Create short video telling about the generosity of someone special/someone who has made a difference in your life. Submit it to [VING!](#) for a chance to award that person a check for \$1,000.

Reflection:

Follow the project with a brief reflection.

1. Discuss the impact of their project on the person they thanked. Reflect on how they felt when they said thank you.
2. Student groups present a slideshow or social media message to encourage others to express gratitude and "pay it forward."
3. Share the reflections with Learning to Give and a national audience. The TeachOne initiative connects teachers across the country with others who completed this project.

Follow-up: Discuss what they'd like to do next to continue aiding their community.

