PRACTICING GRATITUDE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
American Montessori Society
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Introductions

We will be working with partners throughout the workshop.
Let’s use a clap cue to come back.
Please turn to a neighbor and introduce yourself. They are your activity partner!

Thank you, we are grateful to be here!
If there is a right in the soul,
There will be beauty in the person;
If there is beauty in the person,
There will be harmony in the home;
If there is harmony in the home,
There will be order in the nation;
If there is order in the nation,
There will be PEACE in the world.

- Chinese Proverb
PEACE SONG

by Eminem

If the people lived their life as if it were a song, for

singing out of light. Provide the music for the stars to be

dancing circles in the night.

written by a nine year old Russian Boy

YouTube: https://youtu.be/8m-BufY_obk
What did Montessori say about gratitude?

“If man could raise his consciousness to a higher level he would awaken and be aware of...the goodness and self-sacrifice of his fellows. If we educate the children to see this, they will ready themselves to feel gratitude toward all mankind. This is an affective aspect of our ‘cosmic education’. When we send children to buy things in a store...we say ‘Look, that person waiting on you is here to help you...You must feel grateful to her and appreciate what a good person she is.”

(Montessori, Education and Peace, pp. 140-141)
What did Montessori say about gratitude?

“[Schools] must foster a new understanding of the real values of humanity and gratitude must be felt for those workers upon whom human life depends. If man is not appreciated... how can we expect or hope that men will become friends and work in peaceful collaboration?”

(Montessori, A New World and Education, p. 3)
The Brilliance of Young Children
I am a Cloud

I started off being the ocean.
I evaporated and turned into a small tiny cloud.
It felt very fun to be a cloud, because I could do anything I wanted.
I got bigger and bigger because other clouds joined onto me.
The wind blew me around until little bits of cloud drifted off me.
I change shapes.
Sometimes I look like a dog, sometimes I look like a dinosaur.
Sometimes I look like a didgemon.
I rain on some things for days.
I rain on plants and maybe on pear trees.
Maybe I rained on Louis.
Maybe I rained on Louis when he was a pear!

Story told by....
Timmy McKay
5 years and 4 months
Told on March the 20th 2001
Children and Poetry

• “Education begins with poetry.” - Confucius
• “It takes a long time to grow young... It took my whole life to learn how to paint as a child again.” - Pablo Picasso
• “Fortunately preschool teachers are gatekeepers into the rich territories of literacy. They need to communicate expertise to parents so together they can serve as guides to unlock the glories of literacy.” - Dr. Slice Renton, Language Flowering, Language Empowering.
Haiku Poetry
by the children of Wilhelm School Houston, Texas

Grasshopper jumping
Playing in the tall wet grass
Oh! Rain sends him home.    Lara Lopez  5 yrs.

Puddle to puddle
Crickets playfully jumping
Happy rainy day           Tommy Boyd  7 yrs.

Beautiful picture...
Wet green grass painted by rain
Shining sun returns    Ryoko Yuta   4 yrs.

Up high in the sky
Yellow balloons passing clouds
Going to see God    Jessica Dean  4 yrs.
The Secret of Saying Thanks by Douglas Wood
Dirt Made My Lunch
by The Banana Slug String Band
Thanks a Lot
by Raffi

https://youtu.be/ZLphADfy4tw
Research shows...

Gratitude is good for kids and schools!

- Greater happiness and satisfaction with their lives, friends, family, neighborhood, schools, and selves
- Higher end-of-year grade-point averages
- Greater engagement in the work period, homework, and general school participation
Research shows...
Gratitude is good for kids and schools!

• Report more hope, engagement with their hobbies.
• Increase their grateful behaviors, i.e. writing thank you letters to the PA and giving compliments at class meetings
Research shows...
Gratitude is good for kids and schools!

• Show reduction in envy, anxiety, depression, and materialism
• Have greater perceived and actual social support from parents, peers, and teachers

Gratitude practices help build **positive social relationships**, which can greatly reduce risks of school dropout and improve engagement in school.
The Youth Gratitude Project

Funded by the John Templeton Foundation and GGSC’s Expanding Gratitude project

The Youth Gratitude Project (YGP) seeks to understand the keys to—and benefits of—developing gratitude in youth while also shedding light on ways to measure it.
The Preschool Gratitude Program

Program goals:
✓ Learn key gratitude concepts
✓ Have fun with literature, role-plays, and other activities
✓ Create meaningful tools that are useful in the classroom
✓ Develop a foundation for positive relationships and a happy, engaged life in school and beyond

We hope students learn that...
✓ Choosing to feel thankful everyday leads to happy, hopeful, and trustful feelings
✓ Gratitude and kindness help create supportive friendships and a loving community
The Preschool Gratitude Program

The FREE research-tested curriculum includes...

✓ Scripts for each lesson
✓ Materials lists
✓ SEL goals and rationale
✓ Black-line masters and other printable resources
✓ Extensions for school and home
✓ Information about Vanessa’s workshops for teachers and parents
The Youth Gratitude Project

Vanessa Callaghan’s and Giacomo Bono’s Preschool Curriculum will be published by the GGSC as a FREE resource

Get your FREE PDF!

Send a text/email with subject “AMS2018” to...

Vanessa@gratitudeworkshop.com

(510) 459-0926
The Youth Gratitude Project

What kinds of lessons were developed?

1) See More Good with Seymour Goode
2) Show Thanks with The Wheel of Thanks
3) Fill Buckets with Gratitude and Kindness
After reading *The Thankful Book*, students...

• Learn to be thankful for all kinds of things, even silly and surprising things.
• Meet a grateful character, Seymour Goode, in the story *Seymour Goode Sees More Good*. 
See More Good with Seymour Goode
See More Good with Seymour Goode

Students...

• Wear “Goodness Glasses” and use their senses to appreciate the many gifts around them on a yard or neighborhood walk.

• Add gratitude apples to Seymour’s Gratitude Tree.
See More Good with Seymour Goode

Try it!

✓ Put on your Goodness Glasses (finger circles, etc.). What good things do you notice with your eyes, ears, nose, and other senses?
✓ Find at least one good thing you didn’t notice before.
✓ What do you think your kids will will see?
✓ Share with your neighbor for 5 minutes.
KEY GRATITUDE CONCEPT

See More Good

You can notice more things to be grateful for and train your brain to focus on good things.
Show Thanks with The Wheel of Thanks

After reading *Feeling Thankful*, students...

• Discover that gratitude can be felt toward people, things and activities in many different places, like home, school, the beach, the park, etc.

• Role-play as Seymour Goode in different scenarios showing his thanks to his friends.

• Use The Wheel of Thanks to learn about many different ways to say thanks and show gratitude.
Show Thanks with The Wheel of Thanks

Try It!

✓ Think of a time that you felt thankful when someone did something nice for you to help or support you.
✓ Choose from the Wheel of Thanks and make a plan about how you will thank that person.
✓ Share your gratitude story and plan with a neighbor for 5 minutes.
KEY GRATITUDE CONCEPT

There Are Many Ways to Show Thanks

Saying ‘Thanks!’ is just one way to show your gratitude
Fill Buckets with Gratitude and Kindness

After reading *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*, students...

- Practice filling each other’s buckets with kindness and gratitude and notice when we fill each other’s buckets.

- Learn that showing and saying thanks is an act of kindness, and that kindness helps create friendships and spread joy.
Fill Buckets with Gratitude and Kindness

Try it!

✓ Turn to your neighbor and notice something you appreciate about them.
✓ Fill their ‘bucket’ with kindness by giving them a compliment.
✓ How did it feel to give and receive a compliment?
✓ How might your students fill each other’s buckets?
✓ Let’s do this for 5 minutes.
KEY GRATITUDE CONCEPT

Expressing Gratitude Is an Act of Kindness

You can fill up other people’s ‘buckets’ with gratitude
Build Friendship and Community with Gratitude

Students learn that...

- Choosing to feel thankful everyday leads to happy, hopeful, and trustful feelings

- Gratitude and kindness help create supportive friendships and a loving community within the school and beyond.

-Mary Oliver
If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.

Meister Eckhart
The Youth Gratitude Project

Vanessa Callaghan’s and Giacomo Bono’s Preschool Curriculum will be published by the GGSC as a FREE resource

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Questions?

GRATITUDE PRACTICES
for Preschoolers
OTHER RESOURCES

STORIES
(Friends) Andy and the Lion by James Henry Daugherty
(Family) Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig
(Wonders of Life) The Secret of Saying Thanks by Douglas Wood
(What You Have) Gratitude Soup by Olivia Rosewood
(Caring Intentions) Miss Tizzy by Libba Moore Gray

SONGS
Grateful: A Song of Giving Thanks by John Buccino
Native Message of Gratitude: Giving Thanks by Jake Swamp
OTHER RESOURCES

POEMS
Thanks a Million by Nikki Grimes
A Good Day by Brother David Stiendl-Rast
Thanksgiving by Ivy O. Eastwick

CURRICULUM
Nurturing Gratitude from the Inside Out: 30 Activities for Grades K-8, Inner Resilience Program and the Greater Good Science Center
Thanks! A Strengths-Based Gratitude Curriculum for Teens and Tweens, Giacomo Bono and The Greater Good Science Center

FOR ADULTS
Making Grateful Kids: The Science of Building Character by Jeffrey J. Froh and Giacomo Bono
Gratitude Works! by Robert A. Emmons
The How of Happiness by Sonja Lyubomirsky
References


