



Mindfulness

During the Mindfulness mini-lessons, students are learning the benefits of mindfulness and being self-aware of thoughts, emotions, their body, and the environment. They will explore different strategies to determine which strategies will help them best in their daily life. The key message is that learning about emotions and strategies to appropriately manage them helps us make healthier choices.

Lesson Name: Gratitude Journal

Unit Name: Mindfulness

Grade Level: 9-12

Lesson Length: 2 weeks

Before beginning, teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the mini-lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found under "Additional Resources" [here](#).

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to define gratitude and recognize its importance. Students will be able to understand the sacrifices it may cost for someone to do an act of kindness.

Equipment Needed:

- Bulletin board paper for a Gratitude Wall
- Markers, pens, or pencils
- Gratitude Journal

Essential Question (related to objective):

Why is important to express gratitude?

CASEL Core SEL Competency:

Social awareness

- Understanding and expressing gratitude

National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:

Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

- 7.12.2 Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others.

Lesson Overview:

Teachers will begin a discussion on gratitude and its benefits, as well as what it can cost for someone to perform an act of kindness. Students will also understand that when someone does something kind for us, they usually have to sacrifice time, money, or effort. Students will end by writing something they are thankful for and why on the Gratitude Wall. Students will complete a Gratitude Journal for two weeks and then reflect on their journal entries.

Definitions:

Gratitude

the feeling of being thankful and showing thanks for things in your life

Activity Progression:

Introduce the concepts that will be covered in the mini-lesson. Then have students define gratitude in their own words.

Example script: “Today we are going to talk about gratitude, why it’s important, and the sacrifices a person makes when they choose to do something kind for you.”

Share the health, moves, minds, definition of gratitude with the class. Explain to the class why gratitude is important and why it is something we should practice regularly.

Example script: “We’ve all heard of gratitude and probably have even practiced gratitude. The reason we practice gratitude is because it can have huge effects on our mind and body.

For example, gratitude is a positive emotion, and it feels good to be grateful. This can make us feel other positive emotions, which helps improve our mental health.

There are also physical benefits that have been linked to feeling grateful like lower blood pressure and better sleep. We learned that sleep is a part of self-care, so are you seeing how this is all connected?

Finally, when we show gratitude it usually involves us acknowledging someone’s kindness or expressing and feeling thankful, which can make relationships stronger.

When we practice gratitude regularly, all these things can help people feel happier overall and is why we are spending time learning and practicing gratitude.”

Article: [7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude](#)

Explain to students that we can be thankful for all kinds of things in our lives, big or small. Ask students to give an example of big things they might be thankful for and small things they might be thankful for. Have students pair up and walk a lap around the gym or instructional area and share three things they are grateful for. If in a classroom, have students share with a student sitting close to them.

Continue a discussion on when someone helps you what it might cost and how it benefits you.

Example script: “Give me a quick thumbs up if you have had someone do something nice for you before.

You might have felt grateful when that person helped you and you actually needed the help. For someone to help you they have to think about what you need or want even if they don’t get anything out of it. You might not be as grateful if someone helped you only because they wanted a favor later or if they let you borrow a pencil, but you already had one.

Let me ask you this, have you ever thought about what it might cost someone to help you? We tend to think of money but helping someone can also cost time and effort. For example, if a friend helps you clean your room, it costs them time they could be using to do something more fun, and they don’t receive anything for helping your room get clean.

This is what helps us feel grateful because we recognize someone sacrificed their time, money or effort to help with something that might only benefit us.”

Mini-Lesson Name: **Gratitude Journal** Unit Name: **Mindfulness** Grade Level: **9-12**

Create a Gratitude Wall by hanging bulletin board paper around the gym or instructional area. Challenge students to think of one thing they are grateful for by the end of the class and write it on the Gratitude Wall. It can be a person or thing, big or small, as long as it makes them feel good. Encourage them to be specific and identify why it's something they are grateful for.

Example script: "Before you leave class today, I want you to write on the Gratitude Wall one thing you are thankful for. It can be big or small, a person or thing, just be specific. Here are some examples:

- My friend helped me babysit and it made my job easier.
- My mom helped me study for my test, which me feel loved.
- I got to the next level on my favorite game, and it was something that was really hard.

Practicing gratitude regularly, not just sometimes, is one way can take care of our mind and, as we learned today, our body. Over the next two weeks you all are going to spend a little time each day practicing gratitude by keeping a Gratitude Journal."

Have students keep a Gratitude Journal over the course of two weeks. Show them this video. Every day, have students write something they are grateful for and why. At the end of each week, provide students time in class to reflect on something they were grateful for.

Team Champion Tip: Share with students that when someone chooses to donate to the health. moves. minds. fundraiser, they are making a financial sacrifice to support something important to you and our school community. We should always show gratitude even when someone doesn't choose to donate because they just might not be able to at the moment.

Modifications/Differentiation:

- Provide a list in picture format of things to be thankful for. Students with communication challenges can touch a picture out of a selection.

Checks for Understanding:

- Why is it important to express gratitude?
- What kinds of sacrifices might a person make when they choose to do something kind for you?

Gratitude Journal

For the next two weeks, write something you are grateful for and why.

Date	Something you're grateful and why.
<i>Aug 5</i>	<i>My mom helped me study for a test and I got a good grade.</i>

Week 1 Reflection Connection

Pick one of the moments of gratitude from above to reflect on. Did someone do something nice for you? What sacrifices might they have made to help you? How did it affect you? If it's just a good thing that happened, describe what happened and expand on why you're grateful.

Example: "My parents signed me up for gymnastics because this has been something I've been wanting to do since the Olympics. My parents will have to sacrifice time to take me to classes and money for the classes that they could use for something else. They are doing this because they know it will make me happy and it shows me that they care about me and my interests."

Date	Something you're grateful and why.
<i>Aug 5</i>	<i>My mom helped me study for a test and I got a good grade.</i>

Week 2 Reflection Connection

Pick one of the moments of gratitude from above to reflect on. Did someone do something nice for you? What sacrifices might they have made to help you? How did it affect you? If it's just a good thing that happened, describe what happened and expand on why you're grateful.

Example: "My parents signed me up for gymnastics because this has been something I've been wanting to do since the Olympics. My parents will have to sacrifice time to take me to classes and money for the classes that they could use for something else. They are doing this because they know it will make me happy and it shows me that they care about me and my interests."