

MindUP Lesson 13

Expressing Gratitude

Grades: 3-5

Lesson 13: Expressing Gratitude is the thirteenth video in a virtual series of MindUP programming for the 2020-2021 academic year. Based in neuroscience, MindUP teaches the skills and knowledge children need to manage stress, regulate emotions and face challenges with optimism, resilience and compassion.

Length of Lesson: 10 minutes including worksheet

Objectives: In this lesson, students will learn how being thankful supports a healthy mind and a healthy body. Also, they will hear about different ways that they can practice expressing gratitude every single day.

Materials:

- Gratitude Worksheet
- Pen or pencil
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils

Preparation: Have child sitting at a desk or table before starting the lesson.

Expressing Gratitude at Home:

Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness and joy we feel in response to something we've received, whether it is tangible or intangible. Simply focusing for a minute on the experiences in our lives we're grateful for activates the parasympathetic nervous system and shifts our thinking to a calmer, more content perspective. It also releases the neurotransmitter, dopamine, which increases levels of enthusiasm, determination, attentiveness and energy. Children who practice grateful thinking not only have a more positive attitude toward school, but their brains are also more ready to learn. Below are some activities that you can do at home to practice expressing gratitude.

- *Acrostic Poem:* Have your child compose an acrostic poem about someone they are grateful to have in their life. Write this person's name vertically on a piece of paper. Use each letter of his or her name to begin a word or phrase that describes the characteristics or actions they admire.
- *Gratitude Stones:* Collect smooth, small stones for your child and have them write a key experience, thing or person for which they are grateful on their stone in fine-point permanent marker. Place the marked stone in a basket and set them in a special spot. Invite your child to hold their stone and spend a moment being grateful whenever they need a boost. Your child can do this with multiple stones.

REFERENCE

- The Hawn Foundation. (2011). *The MindUP Curriculum Grades Pre-K - 2: Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living* (pg. 102-109). New York, NY: Scholastic.

