

Becoming Courageous

Reflect: Lesson 2

Joy

Objective:

1. To introduce the concept of Gratitude and Joy.
2. To demonstrate the connection between gratitude and joy, and to help the students to develop a gratitude practice.

Rationale:

1. Teaching students gratitude is one of the most powerful things you can do to help them have a positive outlook and to be happy

Alignment to the British Columbia Core Competencies:

Personal Awareness and Responsibility; Self Determination:

1. I can show a sense of accomplishment and joy.
2. I can imagine and work toward change in myself and the world.
3. I can take some responsibility for my physical and emotional well-being.
4. I can use strategies to find peace in stressful times.

Supporting Literature:

1. Dewitt Jones: [Celebrate What's Right With the World](#)
2. [Lessons for a Benedictine Monk, Brother David](#)
3. Article about how [giving thanks makes you happier](#)

Materials and Resources:

1. Courage Journals. Children use exercise books or any type of book or journal. Courage Journals are used to reflect on the content of the day's lesson. Each child should have their own.
2. Smartboard, or projector and speakers. Links to the videos are in the lesson.
3. Videos: [A Good Day with Brother David Steindl-Rast](#)
4. Books: *Giving Thanks* by Jonathan London
Look and Be Grateful by Toni DePaola
If You Plant a Seed by Kadir Nelson
5. Mini-book "Look and be Grateful" for student activity to print out. In order to make the sheet into a book, you fold on the solid grey lines and cut on the short, dotted line. Students can have fun drawing a picture of themselves as the author.

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Lesson (approx 1 hour)

Introduction:

1. Organize students so they can see the smartboard.
2. Show the students the [A Good Day with Brother David](#)
3. Facilitate a conversation with your students about the video. Talk about everyday things that we can be grateful for. Some students will have a lot to say, and others might not be able to think about something (or may be unwilling to share). Being grateful is a gradual process, so be patient with students who will need time to recognize the blessings in their life.

Main Activity:

1. Read the book, *Giving Thanks*. Again, let the children talk/discuss/name things that they are grateful for
2. Read the book, *Look and Be Grateful*. Talk about the difference between “looking” at something, and “seeing” something. Print out the student book, “Look and be Grateful”. (Fold on solid grey lines, cut on dotted lines) Using this little book, students can reflect on what happens when they “see” things in their life, instead of just “looking” at them. This project will have more meaning and impact if the students take time to contemplate and think about the things they can find to be grateful for. It is entirely appropriate to brainstorm a list and make this available to students (on a Smartboard)

Reflective Activity:

Read the book, *If You Plant a Seed*. In their Courage Journals, ask the children to write about some seeds that they can plant in their lives.

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Extensions:

Keeping a Gratitude Journal is an ongoing way to shift one's mindset towards Joy. A Gratitude Journal can be kept weekly or even daily. With time, students learn to focus on what to be thankful for.


The book, *Giving Thanks*, can be used in times of loss. Focusing on gratitude for the person/pet/event that was lost is a powerful tool for healing.

Creative Activity: Gallery of Gratitude. Practicing the act of gratitude, and how that brings joy, is the focus of this creative activity. The "creative activity" button links to a "[Tiny Gallery of Gratitude](#)", by blogger and art teacher Cassie Stephens. In this activity, the students are encouraged to think of all kinds of things that they can be grateful for. At the top of the page is a more extensive gallery - scroll toward the bottom of the page for a simpler one.

Materials:

- Gallery of Gratitude Sheets
- Pencil Crayons

Below I have highlighted where the links are to download the sheets.



Students in fourth grade are working on creating their own **Tiny Art** of school for a couple of days visiting the art teachers in Vermont. Students engaged. I created this **Tiny Gallery of Gratitude** sheet for hope they enjoyed it (I'll find out tomorrow!) but fingers crossed they like it too, **here's a link to the FREE PDF.**



Here is the sheet I created for my kindergarten through second grade students. **(link works, just click on bold sentence!)**

As for supplies, I set out pencils, erasers and color pencils for my students to use. I asked that the students save the work so that we could return to this drawing as a sketch for early finishers. I also want to see what they drew!

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100 Acts of Courage Poster

This poster has been provided in pdf format so that you can print it out in different sizes for different purposes. Click on the “100 Acts Poster” button. The letter size could be used for individuals or small groups, the 11 x 17 size could be hung up in a classroom. You may want to have students fill in a card about their act of courage - a sheet of cards can be printed out by clicking on the “100 Acts Cards” button.