



LESSON PLANS!

GRATITUDE: A PATH TO A POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON LIFE

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

To help young people have a more positive, optimistic outlook on life.

Why should you do this workshop with your students?

- To help them more easily bounce back from challenges in their lives, and thus help them become more resilient, persistent and confident.

 **SKILL** Mindfulness

 **RECOMMENDED LEVEL** All secondary levels

 **DURATION** 20 minutes

BROAD AREAS OF LEARNING

- Health and well-being

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Personal and social competencies:

- Achieves his/her potential

Communication-related competency:

- Communicates appropriately

SUBJECT AREAS AND COMPETENCIES

English, language arts

- Produces texts for personal and social purposes

Physical education and health

- Adopts a healthy, active lifestyle



MATERIALS

- “My Moments of Gratitude” worksheet for every student or notebook or planner.
- A copy of the worksheet already completed by the teacher to use as an example.
- IWB or blackboard with chalk.

CONTENTS

INFO

Basic theoretical concepts about mindfulness

03

PREPARATION PHASE: 5 minutes

04

- **STEP 1:** Discussion about the definition of gratitude
- **STEP 2:** Thinking about the usefulness of gratitude

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: 10 minutes

05

- **STEP 1:** Challenge students to list the best moments of their day
- **STEP 2:** Complete their list of the best moments of the day

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes

08

Reflect on the activity and sharing by student volunteers

INFO

With this worksheet, you will complete a mindfulness activity with your students to develop their gratitude.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness meditation (or attentive presence) comes from Buddhism, but in its current form, it is totally secular and does not involve any religious or spiritual practice. Its aim is to centre the person on the present moment (the here and now) so that they can pay special attention to their physical sensations, emotions and thoughts. This is observation, without any judgement of the experience.

- WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATIONS DO I FEEL RIGHT NOW?
- WHAT EMOTIONS AM I EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW?
- WHAT IDEAS ARE GOING THROUGH MY MIND?

VARIOUS MINDFULNESS PRACTICES**FORMAL PRACTICE**

This is the best-known form, associated with meditation.

PRACTICE "IN ACTION"

This is the practice that we invite you to explore in this activity. It is based on **using mindfulness in everyday life**: while walking, eating, listening, breathing, etc.

THE BENEFITS OF MEDITATION IN CLASS AND AT HOME

Whatever form is selected, practicing mindfulness in class and at home has many beneficial effects for young people.

Meditation helps young people:

- + ACCEPT THEIR EXPERIENCE AS IT IS WITHOUT WANTING TO CHANGE IT
- + AVOID HAVING AUTOMATIC REACTIONS
- + SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE
- + PUT THEIR EXPERIENCE INTO PERSPECTIVE
- + BE MORE RESILIENT WHEN FACING CHALLENGES



PREPARATION:
5 min

IMPLEMENTATION:
10 min

EXIT:
5 min

OBJECTIVE : to understand gratitude and its usefulness

PREPARATION PHASE:

5 minutes



STEP 1: Discussion about the definition of gratitude

WHAT TO DO Begin the discussion with your students to define gratitude.

WHAT TO SAY “In your opinion, what is gratitude?”

WHAT TO DO Write the answers on the board and complete it with the definition below.

Gratitude is the tendency to recognize and appreciate the positive aspects of life.

STEP 2: Thinking about the usefulness of gratitude

WHAT TO SAY “In your opinion, why is it important to feel grateful in life?”

WHAT TO DO Write a few key words from the student responses on the board.

For example:

- To be happy
- To be satisfied with your life
- To feel positive emotions
- To appreciate every day

WHAT TO SAY Finish using the information below:

- “People who are very grateful more easily recognize and enjoy small joys in the present moment, especially when they also practice meditation and mindfulness.
- People who easily recognize the positive aspects of their lives say that they are happier and more satisfied with their lives.
- People who experience more positive emotions find introspection (observation of their thoughts and feelings) easier and set more goals that they actively try to achieve.”



PREPARATION:
5 min

IMPLEMENTATION:
10 min

EXIT:
5 min

OBJECTIF : to help your students develop their gratitude

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE:

10 minutes



STEP 1: Challenge students to list the best moments of their day

INFO

In this section, you will help your students develop their gratitude by becoming fully aware of the small joys in their everyday lives.

Mindfulness helps teenagers avoid getting caught up in a state of always moving at top speed. When they are experiencing difficulties or trying to solve multiple problems, their attention may remain focused on the (past) causes and (future) consequences of their problems in a repetitive, automatic, and unconscious way. This is what we call rumination, and it keeps us from living in the present moment and provokes negative emotions.

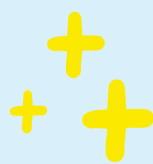
Becoming fully aware of their small moments of joy also helps them find their inner balance.

WHAT TO SAY “Today, I’m asking you to think about the top 3 moments of your day.

What are the small joys and moments for which you are grateful?

Think about spending time with the people you love, rather than about big events or material possessions.

I’d like you to focus on what makes you happy.”



PREPARATION:
5 min

IMPLEMENTATION:
10 min

EXIT:
5 min

OBJECTIF : to help your students develop their gratitude

WHAT TO DO To help them, feel free to give an example and share your list on the IWB or write your answers on the board.

For example: "I laughed this morning with a colleague and it made me feel good", "I ate a piece of my favourite cake at lunch"...

INFO

The brain will naturally pay more attention to the negative things in life than to the positive things. It is by practicing paying more attention to the positive things and the small moments of joy that we can experience in a day that we will manage to reverse this tendency and restore our internal balance.

STEP 2: Complete their list of the best moments of the day

WHAT TO DO Hand out the "My Moments of Gratitude" worksheet to all students or post the worksheet instructions for them to write in a place of your choice (like a notebook or planner).

WHAT TO SAY "I now suggest that you complete **this worksheet** with the 3 best moments of your day."



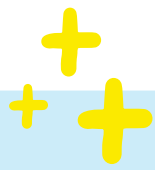
MY MOMENTS OF GRATITUDE

Write down your **3 best moments** of the day, **your small joys**, the things that you are grateful for today.









IF YOU PREFER TO WRITE YOUR ANSWERS IN YOUR PLANNER OR NOTEBOOK, THAT'S FINE!

PREPARATION:
5 min

IMPLEMENTATION:
10 min

EXIT:
5 min

OBJECTIF : to encourage your students to feel grateful each day

EXIT TICKET TASK: 5 minutes



WHAT TO DO To finish, reflect on the activity and invite some students who are comfortable doing so to share their **gratitude list** with the class.

WHAT TO SAY “Would any of you like to share your answers with the group?”

What did you think of this exercise?”

Optional:

- **To expand on this**, you can encourage your students to keep a gratitude journal at home and repeat the exercise a few times in the evening and then schedule a second time in class to discuss their gratitude journals.



LEARN MORE

DISCOVER OUR COMPLETE GUIDE

to practicing mindfulness with your students.



WEBCAST

with psychologist and professor Catherine Malboeuf-Hurtubise, PhD.



LEARN ABOUT TWO TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

with mindfulness meditation in class and a 5-step tutorial for leading your first meditation with your students.



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