

# Gratitude Attitude

## Daily Journal

### Purpose

Engage in a gratitude practice focused on the beautiful and vital work of teaching.

Model a gratitude practice for learners, if appropriate.

### Materials/Preparation

- Gratitude prompts
- Journal, notebook, or digital document

### Get Grounded

- Research by Emmons & McCullough in 2003 found that spending just five minutes each day writing about what we're grateful for can increase our long-term happiness by 10%.
- In 2022 Fekete and Deichert reported that gratitude-focused writing may be better for dealing with stress and negative emotions/mood than traditional expressive writing methods under extremely stressful situations with uncertainty.

### Get R.E.A.L.

1. Get a notebook or digital document.
2. Each day, write the date and respond to the prompt listed for that day.
3. Spend at least five minutes reflecting on the prompt. Write your thoughts or feelings about it.
4. Follow steps 1–3 for 28 days. On the last day, reflect:
  - Looking back over your entries, what common ideas or trends stand out to you? How does what you wrote affect your view of gratitude in teaching and your personal life?

## KEEPING A GRATITUDE JOURNAL

CASEL Competency:

Self-Awareness/Understanding one's own emotions, thoughts and values

Arkansas Department of Education G.U.I.D.E. for Life Relevant Objectives:

Middle/Junior High School:

- Identify my own personal characteristics and values
- Apply self-reflection techniques to recognize my strengths, areas for growth and potential future plans
- Identify positive supports during a conflict situation/crisis

High School:

- Evaluate the role my attitude plays in success (e.g., pessimism vs. optimism)
- Practice strategies for coping with and overcoming stress
- Seek out and identify adult role models and support systems that contribute to my school and life success

## 28 Prompts for Teachers



1. Reflect on a colleague who recently stood by you during a tough moment.
2. Describe a student who recently inspired you.
3. Write about an object or resource in your classroom you are grateful for.
4. What moment in one of your lessons this week affirms your belief in the power of education?
5. What teaching tool or resource has been a lifeline for you?
6. Describe a time when a student challenged your understanding of the world and tell how that broadened your perspective.
7. List three recent moments of connection with students that remind you why you went into this field.
8. Write about a lesson that did not unfold as planned and what it taught you about teaching.
9. Reflect on a parent or caregiver who trusts in your abilities and tell why their partnership helps you do your job.
10. Describe a recent moment of hope for a learner.
11. Describe a moment when a learner recently inspired you.
12. Reflect on a classroom moment that may not have gone as planned but was filled with laughter and joy.
13. Write about a learner's creativity in delivering something different than what you expected.
14. Describe a colleague who serves as a model for you of a certain attribute they have.
15. Write about a moment when an administrator supported your work.
16. List two ways your teaching practice has changed for the better because of your experiences with learners.
17. Describe a cherished teaching or school tradition that motivates you or your learners.
18. List three personal practices that recharge your spirit when teaching.
19. Write about a teaching/learning moment when teaching felt scary to you.
20. Reflect on a time you gave a learner guidance that had nothing to do with your lesson plans that day.
21. Unpack a comment a learner made that showed mature lived experience.
22. Write about one of your past teachers that impacts the way you show up for your learners.
23. Recall something you said that made a learner smile.
24. Look around your teaching environment and describe three small things that make you happy.
25. Write about something a colleague revealed to you that expands your perspective.
26. Reflect on how you've made a connection with a particular parent or caregiver.
27. Describe a time when you made an effort to acknowledge or validate a learner's response in a respectful manner.
28. After looking back over all these entries, tell more about one thing that inspires your gratitude.

## Teaching Tips and Adjustments

- Invite your learners to join you in your 28-day gratitude practice. Begin by sharing your reasons for engaging in a gratitude practice, including some of the benefits. As appropriate, share your prompts, responses, and insights each day.
- Have your middle or high school learners respond to the attached adjusted prompts below that loosely mirror your prompts. (Learner Attitude Gratitude printable). You might simply use the prompts for a “Think-Pair-Share” verbal activity and ask for volunteer responses for the large group.
- Adjust the prompts to fit the needs, language, and context of your learners.
- Screen prompts that may trigger individual learner sensitivities and adjust accordingly and/or preplan statements of nonjudgmental support such as “That sounds difficult. What were you feeling at that time?” or “A lot of students find topics like that trigger those feelings.”
- Remember to be consistent and make gratitude practice a regular part of your professional routine. When engaging with students, model and discuss the importance of consistency for building a gratitude attitude that may influence their mood throughout the day and over time.
- At various points in the discussions or at the end of the 28-day practice, consider these whole-group reflection questions:
  - \* Do you notice any changes in our class environment or culture that may have resulted from our gratitude practice?
  - \* What is something that surprised you during our practice?
  - \* Are there some topics that were difficult to discuss? Why is “challenge by choice” an important guideline?
  - \* How might a gratitude practice influence you as you cope during a tough time? When you have a decision to make?

## References

- Emmons R.A., McCullough, M.E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 84(2):377–389. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377>
- Fekete, E.M. & Galambos, C. M. (2021). A Brief Gratitude Writing Intervention Decreased Stress and Negative Affect During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Happiness Studies*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8867461/>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_



## Attitude Gratitude for Learners

**Purpose: To experience a gratitude practice**



### 28 Daily Prompts:

1. Write about a friend who recently stood by you during a tough moment.
2. Describe a friend or adult who recently inspired you.
3. Write about an object in the classroom that you are grateful for.
4. What recent moment in the classroom did you enjoy?
5. What is something you know how to do that is important for you?
6. Describe a time when a teacher or friend challenged you.
7. Tell about an adult who does something for their job that seems interesting or fun.
8. Describe a time when something did not go as planned but things turned out okay.
9. Reflect on an adult who seems to trust you to do something for them.
10. Describe a challenge you think will get easier someday.
11. Describe a moment when a friend or teacher inspired you.
12. Reflect on a classroom moment that made you laugh out loud.
13. Tell about a time when you improved the teacher's directions.
14. Describe a person in the media who has a skill you want to learn how to do.
15. Describe a principal or school leader who does something cool or that you appreciate.
16. List how a peer has helped you complete a school assignment.
17. Describe a school tradition or routine that you like or you think makes sense.
18. List three things you like to do to recharge your energy.
19. What is something you learned in the last year that you now use a lot?
20. Reflect on a recent time in class when you learned something new.
21. What's something a teacher has recently said that shows they have a life outside the classroom?
22. Tell about a past teacher who influenced you.
23. Recall something you said that made a teacher smile.
24. Look around your school or classroom and describe three small things that make you happy.
25. Write about something a teacher said that makes you want to learn more.
26. Tell why a certain adult in our school is someone you want to get to know better.
27. Describe a mistake you made that showed someone else that it's okay to make mistakes.
28. After thinking about your gratitude moments over the past 28 days, what stands out to you as something you are very grateful for.