



# Room In The Inn: The Power of Gratitude

## Lesson Plan 7th - 9th Grade

**Curriculum Connections:** Social Studies, English, Language Arts, Reading

**Thematic Connections:** Homelessness, Poverty, Friendship, Community, Responsibility, Tolerance, Self-Esteem

### Overview:

The goal of this lesson is to introduce gratitude as a daily practice. It is important for this age group to learn about gratitude for the following reasons:

- Promotes positive mental health
- Instills the value of gratitude at a young age
- Begins breaking down stereotypes of those that are different from them
- Creates awareness for the needs of others

### Goals for this unit:

- Build an awareness for needs of others
- Begin laying a foundation for acts of citizenship
- Provide tangible means for students to practice gratitude in their daily lives

In this lesson plan we've provided suggested videos, discussion questions, and an activity – we strongly encourage group discussion and the activity to ensure students are learning through participation.

### Discussion Questions BEFORE Reading:

- When someone says the word gratitude, what comes to mind?
- How do you show gratitude for others?
  - To your family?
  - To your friends?
  - To your school?
- What are some of the things that you are grateful for?
- How often do you practice gratitude?
- Has anyone ever expressed gratitude towards you?

## Suggested reading:

Read the short story "Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes or listen to it read aloud here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GksvOMzRKBg>

## Discussion Questions:

- How does Mrs. Jones meet Roger?
- What lie does Roger tell?
- How could have Mrs. Jones responded differently to Roger?
- How does Mrs. Jones show hospitality to Roger? How does it compare to how you understand hospitality?
- How can you extend the same kindness to others?

## Read the book *Gratitude Is My Superpower* by Alicia Ortega

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj8kq\\_dfflw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj8kq_dfflw)

## Discussion Questions:

- Why was Betsy so sad?
- What is gratitude?
- How do you play the game "Gratitude"?
- How can gratitude grow?
- What are you grateful for?

## Suggested Videos:

**Watch this short video about gratitude: (4:18 min)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tznztJVsW9E>

## Discussion Questions:

- Take a moment to go through the assignment given to the class in the video. Draw something you are grateful for on a piece of paper.
- What did you draw?
- Why are you grateful for this person, place, or thing?
- Why is practicing gratitude important?
- How is Simon's picture different from the other students'?
- Do you have a "Ms. Sanders" in your life? Who is this person to you?

**\*Activity option:** Have students write letters of appreciation to the "Ms. Sanders" in their lives.

**Watch this video about gratitude: (5:57 min)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR\\_sWQXT8ow](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR_sWQXT8ow)

## Discussion Questions:

- How can you live everyday as a gift?
- How often is your response to a new day gratefulness? Why?
- What everyday things do you often pass by without a thought? In nature? In relationships?
- What are some of the stories you carry? Of yourself? Of your ancestors?
- What gifts have been granted to you? What gifts do you bring to others?
- How can you be intentional about living a life of gratitude? What about on your more difficult days?

## Watch this short video about gratitude: (7:14 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHv6vTKD6lg>

## Discussion Questions:

- Why is practicing gratitude important?
- Do you think practicing gratitude affects your attitude?
- Take a moment to go through the exercise given in the video.
  - Think about the most influential person in your life.
  - Write them a letter.
  - Challenge: Call them and read them the letter or send them the letter.

## Activity Options:

### Writing:

- Have students engage in the [Gratitude Exercise](#).

### Art:

- Have students make [Kindess Rocks](#) to distribute in the community.
- Color "[Welcome Home Basket](#)" labels for those going into housing.

### Service Opportunities:

- Create [snack bags](#) to donate to a local homeless shelter.
- Check out the [Room in the Inn Amazon Wishlist](#) and host a donation drive.

