

Lesson 1

Teacher Guide



# Gratitude

## Objectives and Standards

6<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE



INTERACTIVE

# Lesson 1 – Gratitude

## Objectives and Standards

### Teacher Goals

- Teach students what gratitude is.
- Inspire students to express gratitude to others.

### Student Goals

- Define “gratitude”.
- List 3 people, experiences, or objects they are grateful for.
- Write a poem about gratitude.

### Social-Emotional Domains

- Social awareness
- Self-awareness

### Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6-8.5
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6-8.4
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6-8.4.b

### MATERIALS

- Journal #3: Gratitude printable
- How to Write a Letter printable
- How to Address an Envelope printable
- A Poem About Gratitude printable
- Paper, pencils or pens, or computer and paper if preferred
- Postage stamps and envelopes

### PREPARATION

- Print a copy of Journal #3: Gratitude printable for each student.
- Print a copy of How to Write a Letter and How to Address an Envelope for each student.
- Print a copy of A Poem About Gratitude printable for each student.



## Lesson 1 Activities

### Talk About It

- Write the word “gratitude” on the board.
- Have students explain in their own words what the word means.
  - If they need help getting started, circle the root word grat, noting that this root is related to thankfulness and pleasure. You may perhaps also list other words that include the root, such as grateful and gratuity.
- Share a definition of “gratitude”.
  - Gratitude means being aware of, and appreciating, the people, experiences, and objects in your life.
- Ask volunteers to share ways they can express gratitude.

### Think About It

- Have students reflect on gratitude in their journals by using the Journal #3: Gratitude printable to record three people, experiences, or objects they are thankful for, along with explanations.
- Tell students they will use this list to help them complete two writing activities later.
  - Option 1: leave the assignment open-ended and let students choose any combination of people, experiences, and objects. However, caution them that later, they will need to think of people they are grateful for. Thus, it may be to their advantage to include at least one person in their reflection.
  - Option 2: require students to list one person, one experience, and one object.

### Write About It – Thank You Letter

- Distribute a copy of How to Write a Letter and How to Address an Envelope to each student.
- Tell students that they will be writing a thank you letter to express their gratitude to someone.
- Review the five parts of the thank you letter template.
- Give students time to write their thank you letters in class. For homework, have students find out their recipient’s mailing address and bring it to class.
- After class, proofread each student’s letter for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Provide feedback so they can make corrections.
- Have students address the envelopes and mail their letters.

## Read About It

- Distribute a copy of A Poem About Gratitude to each student.
- Read the poem aloud, or have students read it silently before asking a volunteer to read it aloud.
- Review elements of poetry by analyzing its structure, pointing out its rhyme pattern, rhythm, and organization in stanzas.
  - Tell students later they will be writing a poem of their own that is inspired by either the content or structure of the Edgar Guest poem, so they may wish to take notes.

## Write About It – Gratitude Poem

- On their own paper or using technology, have students write a poem about gratitude that is inspired by one of the entries in their Journal #3 answers, as well as by the Edgar Guest poem.
  - They may choose one or more of these elements, along with any they identify on their own:
    - Rhyme
    - Rhythm
    - Topic
    - Stanzas
  - Encourage students who wrote about a person to share their poems with that person as an expression of gratitude.

## Extension Activities

- Encourage students to explore other poems by Edgar A. Guest. Many are available online. You may also wish to have students reflect in writing on their favorite poem.
- Have students research poetry forms (sonnet, free verse, cinquain, etc.) and write another gratitude poem using their favorite form.
- Encourage students to list 3 things they are thankful for each day in a private gratitude journal.
- With consent, collect students' poems into a classroom book of gratitude for students to enjoy.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Journal #3: Gratitude

Write about three people you are grateful for. Explain why you are grateful for each one in as much detail as possible.

I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_ because

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I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_ because

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I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_ because

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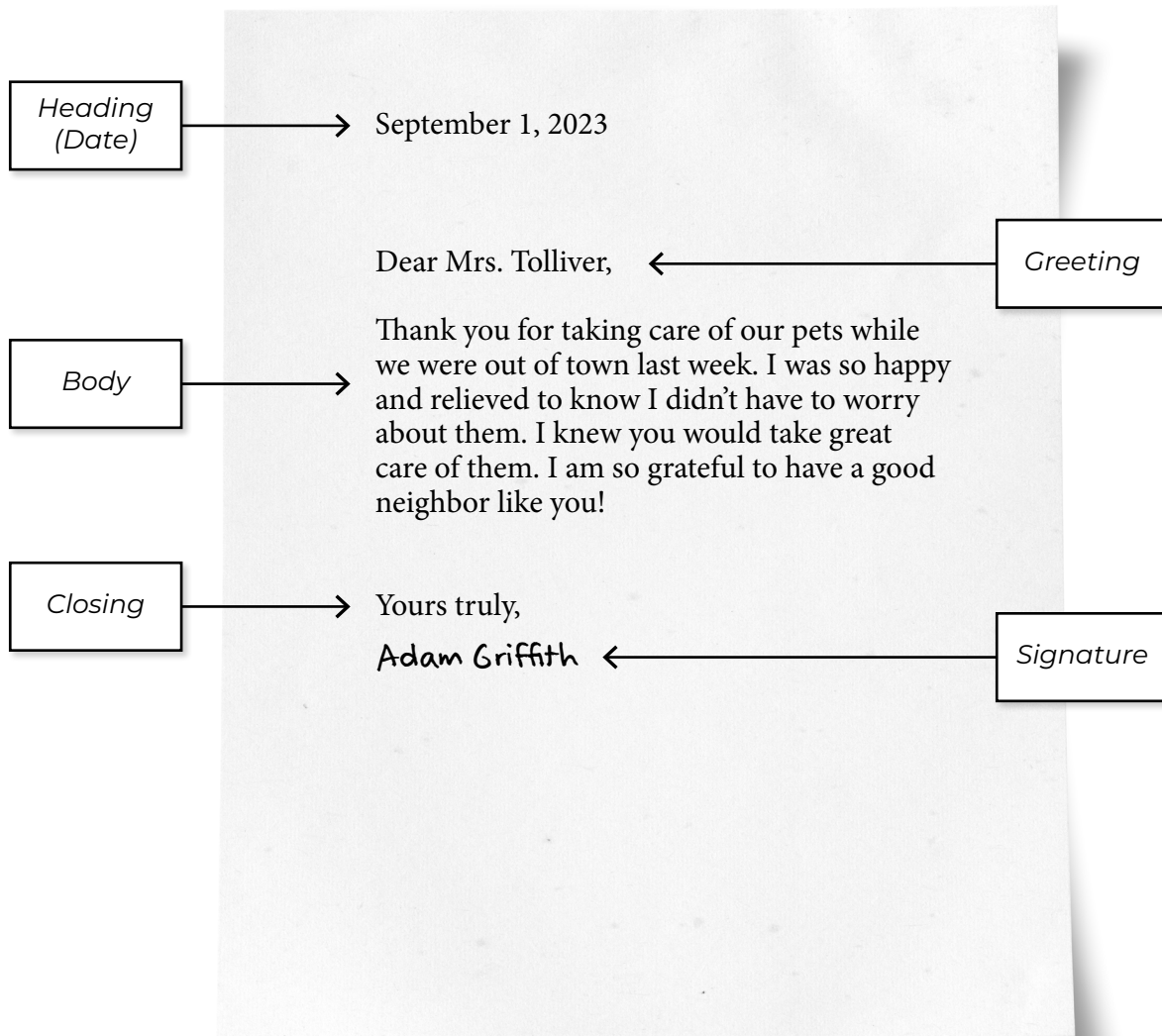
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## How to Write a Letter

A friendly letter, such as a thank you letter, has five parts:

- Heading – usually the date
- Greeting – usually *Dear [Name]*,
- Body – your main message; one or more paragraphs
- Closing – *Yours truly, / Sincerely, / Love,*
- Signature – your signature (in your own handwriting, if you typed the rest of the letter)



Use the example above to help you write your own thank you letter on separate paper.

# How to Address an Envelope



## A Poem About Gratitude

“Gratitude”, by British-American poet Edgar A. Guest (1881-1959), appeared in his 1916 poetry collection called A Heap o’ Livin’.

### Gratitude

by Edgar A. Guest

Be grateful for the kindly friends that walk along your way;  
Be grateful for the skies of blue that smile from day to day;  
Be grateful for the health you own, the work you find to do,  
For round about you there are men less fortunate than you.

Be grateful for the growing trees, the roses soon to bloom,  
The tenderness of kindly hearts that shared your days of gloom;  
Be grateful for the morning dew, the grass beneath your feet,  
The soft caresses of your babes and all their laughter sweet.

Acquire the grateful habit, learn to see how blest you are,  
How much there is to gladden life, how little life to mar!  
And what if rain shall fall to-day and you with grief are sad;  
Be grateful that you can recall the joys that you have had.