



THANKFULNESS LESSON PLAN

lesson 4 - Using Thankfulness to create positive thought patterns

Lesson outline - Introduction video, discussion and practical acting exercise. *NOTE* depending on the age of students, alter question level to match this. Also, we reccommnd reading through the long form notes as there are examples there.

LESSON TIME 10 - 20 MINS

LESSON OUTLINE

Lesson Starter

1. question: *What are you thankful for today?*

(to see progress over the week)

RECAP: *HOW did thanking others yesterday go?*

2. watch session 4 intro video [CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)

Activities

3. Questions- below

4. practical - below

Wrap-up

5. Challenge - Tonight when you are asked to do something by your parent(s)/caregivers, think of all the things that you have to be thankful for.

OBJECTIVES

1. To inform about the positive benefits of expressing thanks

2. Use role-playing to practice giving thanks in a challenging situation where a negative thought and action would usually happen.

QUESTIONS

Question: *Can you give me some examples in your lives of physical pathways/ways to get somewhere that you take without having to think about them? ie: to school, the shops, the pantry, the library.*

Question: *Please give me some examples of when you see/hear/smell something and what shortcut your brain takes and wants to do*

Question: *What are some examples of thought pathways that don't result in a great reaction from you. ie being asked to tidy up*

Question: *What things are there that you could be Thankful for in these situations to re-direct your thoughts to a better reaction?*

KEY THOUGHTS

Our brains have thought roads called neurological pathways.

If we think a thought enough, our thoughts get used to traveling down these same roads.

Using Thankfulness You can train your thoughts to go down positive thought roads instead of negative thought roads resulting in a more positive action and this can give you a better outcome!

the process: What you see/hear, what you think (your pathway), what you do (action)

PRACTICAL

role-playing exercise a great way to practice being Thankful in challenging times.

Ask the students to choose a scenario, or CREATE one where a challenge comes along and they act out:

1/ what would normally happen if bad thought pathways happen?

2/ putting on thankfulness glasses and what happens when you train your mind to think of these things and the resulting action.

These can just be acted in break out groups, or you could get some groups to act up front. You could also suggest a student narrator speaks over what is happening



THANKFULNESS LESSON PLAN

lesson 4 - Using Thankfulness to create positive thought patterns

ALTERNATIVE LONG-FORM LESSON NOTES

Recap: Since yesterday how did you get on thanking people?

Today is how to use your Thankfulness Glasses in tough times.

[Watch Session 4 video here](#)

Our brains have thought roads called neurological pathways. When we see cake our brain says 'EAT IT!' This is because we have eaten cake many times and our brain knows that it is delicious and will do anything to get that cake! (we spend our adult lives trying to retrain this)

Our brain does this by forming thought roads. If we think a thought enough, our thoughts get used to traveling down these same roads. This is just the same as traveling to school. If you drive, walk or ride the same way many times, you will start doing this without even needing to (consciously) think about it.

Question: Can you give me some examples in your lives of physical pathways/ways to get somewhere that you take without having to think about them? ie: to school, the shops, the pantry, the library.

Question: Please give me some examples of when you see/hear/smell something and what shortcut your brain takes and wants to do: ie: see cake, smell a blow-off ;) a ball coming at you, the school bell.or for younger students - when you see/hear/smell the examples what do you want to do.

Note, the process: What you see/hear, what you think (your pathway), what you do (action)
Thought-provoking question: Think of your reaction to these situations; When you are asked to tidy up, when you see cake, when the school bell rings in the morning, when you look in the mirror

Question: What are some examples of thought pathways that don't result in a great reaction from you. ie being asked to tidy up

Question: What things are there that you could be Thankful for in these situations to direct you to a better reaction?

Tidying up; Thankful: I have things, I enjoyed using them, I will know where they are next time, the area will be tidy, I have hands to pick these up. Some of these thought roads in our brain are great and helpful! Some are not so great:Imagine this:You come home after school, do your homework (wink) and you are already to sit down and have some device time when..... one of your parents asks you to do something! Your reaction might be to groan, run away or lie down and kick your feet in the air!

Question: Who thinks this might not work out that well for you.....? Or When the next maths lesson at school comes along, you might think 'I am not good at maths'. These could leave you feeling sad, mad or discouraged and not confident to try your best and have a go.

Question: Who would rather have the thought road: 'I can have a go and figure this out' ? You can train your thoughts to go down positive thought roads instead of negative thought roads and this can give you a better outcome! Instead of thinking what is going wrong and what you don't have, think of all that is going well and what you do have This is where we need to pull out our Thankfulness Glasses and put them on. When we are feeling sad, mad, discouraged or challenged.

Question: What are things that you can be Thankful for when the Maths lesson comes along? Things to be thankful for: You are at school and learning, you have an amazing brain that can learn this, you can read the words and numbers, you can write down the answers, that you have a teacher to help you learn, that you have learned maths in the past and can do it again in the future, that you are in a covered building.... When you think of all of the things to be thankful for, you feel empowered!

Question: What you can be thankful for about living in your house and Whanau/family the next time that your mum or dad ask you to do something? Things to be thankful for: That you have parent(s) or caregivers, that you live in a house, that you are part of a family team, that you have clothes to wear, you have food to eat, that you have people who love you, that you have the ability to help When you think of all these things to be thankful for, you feel grateful for your parents and that you have an important part to play in your family's team'.

Question: What is there to be thankful for the next time that someone says something about you that is not kind? Things to be thankful for: That you are alive, that you have an amazing mind, that you have many talents, that you can see/hear, that you are kind, that you have teachers and parents that you can talk to about this.

Practical: This is a role-playing exercise which is a great way to practice being Thankful in challenging times.

Ask the students to choose a scenario, or create one where a challenge comes along and they act out. Scenario and groups act out:

- 1/ what would normally happen if bad thought pathways happen?
- 2/ putting on thankfulness glasses and what happens when you train your mind to think of these and the resulting action?

These can just be acted in break out groups, or you could get some groups to act up front. You could also suggest a narrator speaks over what is happening Scenarios: Maths lesson, being asked to do something by an adult, someone being unkind to them, not wanting to try something new, wanting to give up.

Challenge: Tonight when you are asked to do something by your parent(s)/caregivers, think of all the things that you have to be thankful for