

Gratitude Journal

NAME _____

DATE _____

NOTICE • NAME • APPRECIATE

WHY THIS MATTERS

When you explain why something mattered, you start to notice what helps you feel supported, happy, calm, or proud.

DIRECTIONS

Each day this week, write one thing you are grateful for and a short reason why. It doesn't have to be big — small moments count!

Week of: _____

MONDAY

I am grateful for... _____

Because... _____

TUESDAY

I am grateful for... _____

Because... _____

WEDNESDAY

I am grateful for... _____

Because... _____

THURSDAY

I am grateful for... _____

Because... _____

FRIDAY

I am grateful for... _____

Because... _____

MY WEEK IN GRATITUDE

The thing I felt most grateful for this week was... _____

Gratitude Journal

Grades 3–5 • Cross-subject • SEL

The because line is the upgrade: naming WHY something mattered turns noticing into reflection, and the weekly favourite builds the habit of looking back.

Quick Start

LEARNING TARGET

Students notice specific moments of gratitude and explain why each one mattered, building reflection and a positive frame.

TIME

5 min/day × 5 days + 10 min wrap

GROUPING

Independent, optional pair share

MATERIALS

Printed sheet, pencil

Guiding questions: What is one small thing you noticed today? Why did it matter to you? Who or what helped make it happen?

Facilitation Sequence

- 1 Launch**
Model one entry aloud — something small and specific, plus a real "because." Name that gratitude isn't only for big things.
- 2 Student work**
Students add one entry per day. Watch for generic entries; prompt with "what exactly?" Offer the private option to anyone hesitant.
- 3 Consolidate & discuss**
Invite a few volunteers to share a "because." Surface the key idea: the reason is what turns noticing into reflection.
- 4 Wrap-up**
Students complete "My Week in Gratitude." Collect sheets or have students keep them; sharing is invited, never required.

Answer Key & How to Approach

Item	Expected Answer	How to Approach / Accept
Daily entries	Any genuine entry — small and specific beats big and generic.	Never grade the content of gratitude; respond to specificity: "my brother's joke at dinner" over "my family."
"Because" line	A real reason tied to a feeling or effect.	Accept any honest reason. If blank, model one: "... because it made me laugh after a hard day."
Weekly reflection	One chosen moment with a why.	Look for a genuine pick, not the "right" answer. Specificity is the signal of reflection.

Likely Responses, Misconceptions & Teacher Moves

Students may...	What that might mean...	A helpful next move...
Write the same entry every day	A narrow lens, or a safe default when unsure what "counts."	Gently widen the lens: something you SAW today? heard? ate? a person who helped?
Write entries that feel performative or expected	They're writing for the teacher, not for themselves.	Offer the private option — entries can be for the writer only; sharing is invited, never required.
Struggle to find entries during a hard week	Genuine difficulty or low mood; gratitude feels out of reach.	Shrink the scale: warmth, a meal, one kind word. Acknowledge the hard part first — gratitude isn't denial.

Equity, SEL & Trauma-Informed Prompts

Equity	SEL	Trauma-Informed
Invite gratitude from many contexts — home, culture, community, food, language, nature — so it isn't only about material things or one kind of family.	Naming what we appreciate builds self-awareness and a positive frame. Some students feel exposed sharing — protect the option to keep entries private.	Offer a private response option and a predictable structure. Acknowledge that hard weeks are real; never require sharing.

UDL, Differentiation & Language Supports

More support	Ready for more	Language supports
Oral rehearsal or a quick sketch before writing; a word bank of people, places, and feelings; the frame "I am grateful for ___ because ___."	Add a "because" that names a feeling, connect a gratitude to a goal, or write a short thank-you note to one person named this week.	The language function is explain (X because Y). Pair sentence frames with oral rehearsal; allow first-language drafting.

Assessment Look-Fors & Next Steps

Criterion	What it looks like here	Helpful next step
Specificity	Names a concrete moment, person, or thing — "my brother's joke at dinner."	If generic, prompt "what exactly?" and model a specific rewrite.
Reflection (the "because")	Gives a genuine reason tied to a feeling or effect.	If missing, model one aloud and invite a retry — no penalty.
Consistency	Completes most entries across the week (4-5 days).	If sparse, shrink the scale and protect daily time to write.

Reteach signal: if many students leave "because" lines blank, pause and model two or three reasons aloud before the next entry — the reason is the part that builds reflection.