

Gratitude Lesson Plans

SESSION 3: Cost

Goal of session:

- To establish an understanding that often when others help us, they are also giving up something in order to help us. Thus by giving their help, it *costs* that person either time, money, effort, etc.

Objectives:

- Define cost in terms of time, money, effort, talents, etc.
- Have students identify a personal experience of cost as it is connected to feeling grateful.

Materials:

- Chalk board or wipe board.
- The Giving Tree, written by Shel Silverstein.
- “Giving Back” sheet found at the end of the gratitude lessons.
- Crayons, markers, scissors, and glue.
- Large sheet paper.
- Gratitude journals or paper and pencils for students.

Set it up:

(3-5 minutes)

The teacher will review the previous session.

Teacher: “Hello boys and girls. As many of you might remember, we have been talking about what it means to feel grateful. Last time we met, we said that we often feel grateful when someone does something intentionally or on purpose in order to help us. What does it mean when someone does something intentionally or on purpose? Why might we feel grateful if someone does something on purpose to help us? Let’s take a few moments and jot down on any piece of paper why we might feel grateful when another person intentionally helps us.”

The teacher will wait for students to write down an example and then have volunteers share their experience.

Teacher: “Let us also take a brief moment to review our Gratitude Counts! assignment. How many of you were gratitude detectives during the past day?! I’m sure that many of you were on the lookout for different things that made you feel thankful when others go out of their way to help us. Who can tell the group some of the different things that made you feel thankful during the past day? How did you know that someone went out of their way to help you?”

The teacher will allow for a few volunteers to read aloud their Gratitude Counts! assignment.

Talk about it:
(3-5 minutes)

Teacher: “Today we will learn more about grateful feelings, but first I have a new word I want to show you.” The teacher will write the word “cost” on the board. “Can anyone tell me what the word cost means?” Possible answers may include anything to do with money. The teacher will also explain that “cost may also mean giving up something in order to help another person.” “Just like we learned last yesterday, when someone intentionally helps us, they also give something up to help us. A possible example may include: “your sister helps you to do your homework and by helping you she gives up some of her time doing her own homework.” “In this example, what did your sister give up?” Possible answers may include her time doing her homework, her knowledge, and her help.

Teacher: “It is important to see that cost may be more than money. It can mean any resource a person gives up to help another person. Another example may be that your parent helped you to do research for a school project. Your parent had plans to go out to the store, and by helping you, he or she gave up plans to go to the store. So in this example we see that cost can mean giving up plans or other activities to help another person. Let us think of a time when someone gave up something or it cost that person something to help us. Then share your example with the person seated next to you.”

After students have shared their experiences with another student, volunteers will be chosen to discuss with the class.

Read about it:
(5-7 minutes)

The teacher will then read the book, The Giving Tree, by Shel Silverstein. After reading the book, the teacher will discuss the resources the tree gave to the boy as an example of cost.

Teacher: “Why do you think I chose this book to read? I chose this book because we can see that cost, or giving something does not always have to mean money. When we give something to someone else, we may be giving up our time, our attention, our talents, or any number of things. In this particular story we see that the tree gave up a number of things when she helped the boy. Let’s name some of the things that cost the tree to help the boy.” Students may name all the things the tree gave the boy, such as her shade, her love, apples, branches, and her trunk.

The discussion will continue with exploring the point of view of both the boy and the tree.

Teacher: “How do you think the tree felt giving her resources to help the boy?” Possible answers could be that she was happy to help the boy because she loved the boy. If students answer that she did not want to help the boy, or she was sad to help the boy, the teacher can explain that the tree did want to help because she loved the boy. “How do you think the boy felt when he received all the resources from the tree?” Possible answers may reflect either positive feelings from the boy or negative feelings in that the boy continued to ask for more resources from the tree. “Do you think the boy displayed his gratitude for the tree?”

Possible answers may include that either yes, he did show his thanks to the tree at the end of the story by spending time with the tree, or no, he did not show his gratitude. The teacher will make the connection that the boy most likely felt grateful to the tree; however, he did not always make the time to show his thanks.

Teacher: “What would the boy be thinking in order to feel grateful?” Answers may include, the tree helped him on purpose, the tree gave up many things to help him (i.e., apples, branches, trunk), and she benefited him.

Create it:
(10 minutes)

The teacher will hand out the “Giving Back” sheet (found at the end of the lessons) which is a picture of a leaf. The teacher will continue the discussion.

Teacher: “How do you think the boy could have expressed to the tree that he was grateful for all that cost the tree or all that she gave up to help him? Now I want all of us to pretend we are the boy in this story. On the inside of the leaf I want you to write down one thing you would do to show the tree you were grateful for all she did. You can all use crayons and markers to decorate the leaf however you like. Then please cut out the leaf so that we can make our own “Giving Back Tree.”

The teacher may assist students in developing ideas to display gratitude to the tree. Possible answers may include material ways of displaying affection, such as giving gifts or bringing her back the resources. The teacher will explain that the boy can also give his own time to spend with the tree, which is a very special gift to show your gratitude. Once students have completed their leaf, the teacher will have students come up and will add each leaf to the large sheet paper, to create “The Giving Back Tree.”

Jot it down:
(3 minutes)

Students will be asked to take out their gratitude journals.

Teacher: “On page 6 of your gratitude journals, I would like for you to think of a time that someone went out of their way to help you. Write about what they did. What did it cost them to help you? How did that make you feel?”

The teacher will next instruct students to place the gratitude journals in their desk and hold on to them until next session.

Sum it up:
(2-3 minutes)

Teacher: “Ok boys and girls, to sum up we learned that cost means many things. This includes, giving up money, time, effort, and talent to name a few. When someone intentionally goes out of their way to help us, they may also be giving something up, which costs, them something. As we read in *The Giving Tree*, many times when someone gives up something for us, we make forget to show we are thankful if we do not recognize that someone intentionally helped us and it cost them something. Therefore we can do something in return to give back! For the Gratitude Counts! assignment today, please open up to page 7 in your gratitude journals. During the day, think about different times someone helped you. Write about what they did and what it might have cost that person to help you.”

Teacher: “You all did a wonderful job writing down the things you would do to show your gratitude. Thank you all for your hard work!”

The teacher will also allow for any further questions or comments.