

# Grade 7 – Challenge #3

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## Show Appreciation to Those Who Have Helped You


**William James, well-known psychologist and philosopher, said, “The deepest principle of human nature is a craving to be appreciated.” We all want and need to feel valued for who we are and recognized for our contributions. It’s important for us to know that we have made a difference in someone’s life. If a person takes the time to express their heart-felt appreciation for something we have done, it boosts our spirit, passion, and purpose. It builds our self-confidence, self-esteem and our entire self-image. It gives us energy and motivation to work harder and do more. Below are four easy ways to show appreciation to those who have helped you.**

**1. Say “thank you”.** It seems like this is a given, but people usually throw the words “thank you” out as an attachment to “see you later.” Take the time to give a sincere thank you to people you care about. For example, “I really appreciate you making dinner tonight. You really made my day easier. Thank you.” Or, “Thank you for taking the time to talk to me about this issue. Your listening really helped ease my mind.”

**2. Recognize “little things”.** We often pay the most attention to the bigger, more obvious things people do for us, but opportunity to show appreciation comes in many forms. Recognize the smaller things and make it clear to your friends or family that their efforts are meaningful.


**3. Reciprocate.** There are different kinds of reciprocation. One kind is direct — a friend is there for you when you need to talk, so when your friend needs someone to talk to, you make sure to be there for your friend. Another kind of reciprocation is less direct but tends to be equal in weight of effort — your mother cooks dinner, so you clean the kitchen. Reciprocation is a way of showing that for every ‘take’ you want to give back. It’s not necessary to keep score in a relationship, but as a general rule, giving whenever possible is probably balancing a previous take — you can never give too much.

**4. Give a small, meaningful gift.** It doesn’t take spending money to show appreciation. At times a small gift can be an acceptable way to show appreciation, but it doesn’t have to be a purchased gift. Make something meaningful. For example: some may appreciate homemade cookies, or maybe a photo album of meaningful events together. The creativity of the gift is up to you, but make sure it has relevance to the other person. Don’t simply find something you like and give it to them.



“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”

— Marcel Proust



“We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives.”

— John F. Kennedy

# Show Appreciation to Those Who Have Helped You

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Take a few minutes to reflect on those who have helped you throughout your life. In the chart below, identify those people and how they have helped you. Then take a moment to think of a way to show your gratitude to those people.

Identify a person from each category who has helped you.	Describe how this person helped you.	Explain how you could thank this person for their help.
<b>A Family Member...</b>		
<b>A Friend...</b>		
<b>An Adult at School...</b>		
<b>A Classmate...</b>		
<b>Anyone Else...</b>		

Make a promise to yourself that you will follow through on at least two of ways you identified above to show appreciation to someone who has helped you.

# Activity – Gratitude Tree

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## **PURPOSE**

This activity will allow students to identify a personal experience with feeling grateful and share that feeling with the class. It will also allow students to create an outward, physical expression of their gratitude that will be displayed in the classroom.

## **MATERIALS**

1. Leaves (provided)
2. Paper for Tree Trunk (provided)
3. Markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc.
4. Scissors
5. Tape
6. Thank You Notes (provided – optional)

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Give each student a leaf (provided).
2. Students should write three things for which they are grateful on the leaf. Encourage them to take time to really think about this – list things for which they are truly grateful, maybe someone they've never thanked before.
3. Students can decorate and cut out their leaf. They can write their name on the back of the leaf or leave it as an anonymous expression of gratitude if they prefer.
4. Once finished, have the students share their expressions of gratitude with the class.
5. Have a few students or your mini-team leaders draw the trunk and branches of a tree on the paper provided.
6. Each student should place their leaf on the Gratitude Tree. Display the tree somewhere in homeroom.

## **IF YOU HAVE SOME EXTRA TIME**

Hand out the provided thank you notes to students who finish early and ask them to write a thank you note to one of our cafeteria workers, custodians or bus drivers. These are people who fill our bellies, give us an inviting, clean place to learn and bring us to and from school safely everyday. They certainly deserve to be thanked for all they do. Collect any thank you notes that are completed and give them to Ms. Mazzola. She will be sure they get to the people who have earned them!