

Post Activity: Belonging and Connecting - Harold's Thankful Heart **Age Group**  
**3-5yrs**

**Lesson Overview**

This pre school centre staff resource explains how to conduct an in-centre activity to consolidate children's learning after the Life Education visit. It explores emotions and gratitude felt by young children. During the post-visit activity children will discuss and engage in thought provoking experiences through activities relating to their feelings and situations involving feeling thankful/gratitude.

**Aims and Objectives**

- Encouraging deeper and higher order thinking whilst fostering children's emotional intelligence through acknowledging and accepting others, showing gratitude to each other in the preschool community.
- Through reading and discussion of ethical questions, children will encounter the language.
- To foster children's knowledge and understanding in relation to belonging and connection to others in their everyday lives through concepts of gratitude and thankfulness.
- To promote higher order thinking through engaging experiences and discussions on topic.

**Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes**

**Outcome 1**

Children have a strong sense of identity

**Outcome 2**

Children are connected with and contribute to their world

**Outcome 3**

Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

**Early Years Learning Framework Codes**

1.3 - Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities

1.4 - Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

2.1 - Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation

3.1 - Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing

**Early Years Learning Framework Content**

**When Children:**

- Feel recognised and respected for who they are
- Explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play
- Share aspects of their culture with the other children and educators
- Celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others
- Show interest in other children and being part of a group
- Express a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively
- Display awareness of and respect for others perspectives
- Begin to recognise that they have a right to belong to many communities
- Build on their own social experiences to explore other ways of being



- Participate in reciprocal relationships
- Are playful and respond positively to others, reaching out for company and friendship
- Acknowledge and accept affirmation
- Show an increasing capacity to understand, self-regulate and manage their emotions in ways that reflect the feelings and needs of others

**When Educators:**

- Promote in all children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others
- Ensure all children experience pride and confidence in their achievements
- Listen to and learn about children's understandings of themselves
- Share their learning with children through open discussion
- Model care, empathy and respect for children, staff and families
- Promote children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing
- Talk with children about their emotions and responses, supporting their understandings of emotional regulation and self control
- Acknowledge and affirm children's effort and growth

**National Quality Framework Content**

**Quality Area 1:**

Educational program and practice

**Quality Area 3:**

Physical environment

**Quality Area 5:**

Relationships with children

**Quality Area 6:**

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

**National Quality Standard Content**

Standard 1.1: Element 1.1.2, 1.1.5, 1.1.6.

Standard 1.2: Element 1.2.2.

Standard 3.2: Element 3.2.1.

Standard 5.1: Elements 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3.

Standard 5.2: Element 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3.

Standard 6.2: Element 6.2.1, 6.2.2.

Standard 6.3: Element 6.3.1, 6.3.2.

**Developmental Areas**

Social/Emotional Language, Literacy and Communication skills



## Resources/Materials

- Card board tree shape or real branch
- Leaf cut outs and a template to create more
- Mixed writing/drawing media - paper, pencils, crayons, water, colour pencils, graphite pencils
- Scissors to cut out more leaves
- Love heart cut outs and red paper to create more

## Language/ Vocabulary

Feelings, happy, sad, excited, jealous, proud, love, lonely, gratitude, kindness, thankful, helpful, friendship, sharing.

## Higher Order Thinking Skills or Inquiry Model

### Higher Order Thinking:

Howard Gardner - Theory of Multiple Intelligence's: "Visual/Spatial Intelligence"  
Visual cues and communication to foster learning

### Constructivism:

Lev Vygotsky - Play Based Social Learning  
Social development, child actively engaging and connecting with others  
Collaborative learning and participation

## Lesson Introduction

Begin with a small group of children (maximum 10 in each group) in a group time situation, to ensure that all children have an opportunity to participate and engage in the follow up activity.

Sit in a circle on the floor to foster unity and inclusion (Vygotsky).

Utilise the Life Education "Happy Thankful Song" found at [lifeeducation.org.au/songs](http://lifeeducation.org.au/songs) as an ongoing reinforcement of thankfulness and gratitude.

### Happy Thankful Song:

*"This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*I'm thankful for the sun that shines in the sky  
For the flowers and the birds and the butterflies*

*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*I like to see my friends each day  
We share our toys and laugh and play*

*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*There's yummy food on my plate  
It helps me grow and feel so great*

*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*Teachers help me learn each day  
We paint and read and sing and play*

*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*When I'm tired and in my bed at night  
My family tucks me in safe and tight*

(lyrics continued on next page)



*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along*

*My heart feels big and happy today  
I'm so thankful in every way*

*This is a happy thankful song  
I hope you'll sing & clap along"*

## Main Body of Teaching

Suggest to children that their preschool could grow their own Gratitude Tree.

What could we say to each other?

Educator supports children by choosing specific children to show gratitude toward each other to foster empathy, building of relationships, respect, compassion, friendship, communication, and emotional awareness and intelligence.

Set up an allocated area for a learning centre with real tree branch, if accessible (connection to natural materials and environment,) or a cardboard cut out of a tree without leaves. Have all materials and educator accessible to students to encourage them to share what they are thankful for in relation to their peer relationships. Eg: "I am thankful to Ava for helping me open my lunch box." OR "I think Ava is good at drawing." OR "I like the way that Ava asks me to play with her."

Educators can promote this by role modeling the first few leaves. E.g "I am thankful that you all listened so carefully to the story."

Encourage deeper and higher order thinking whilst fostering children's emotional intelligence through acknowledging and accepting others, showing gratitude to each other in the preschool community.

Children show gratitude to peers for their thankful message by adding a small heart sticker to the leaf symbolising how they have made their heart as well as the tree grow.

## Conclusion

Conclude experience as children's interest diminishes over time or at the end of a time period decided within the centre. Conclude by taking the time to read children's words and thoughts as a group promoting self esteem and building relationships amongst the stakeholders.

## For the Educator

The content given to Early Childhood educators will be sufficient enough for them to be highly capable of adapting the content to teach into their individual setting, taking into account their individual children and their centre culture.

## Assessment (in centre)

Preschool educators assess the children by adding a small heart sticker to the leaf, symbolising how they have made their heart as well as themselves grow.



### Additional Comments/Notes

#### **Possible Extension**

Parents and families could also be invited to add messages to the tree.

Involve parents and families by encouraging them to download and explore Life Education’s app *Healthy Harold, Healthy Me* with their children.

### Sources

- DWEER, (2009). ‘Belonging, Being & Becoming’, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority, (2011). National Quality Framework, National Quality Standards, [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Vygotsky, L. (2013), *Theories of Childhood, Second Ed: An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget & Vygotsky*, Redleaf Professional Library.
- Gardner, H. [http://www.niu.edu/facdev/resources/guide/learning/howard\\_gardner\\_theory\\_multiple\\_intelligences.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/facdev/resources/guide/learning/howard_gardner_theory_multiple_intelligences.pdf)



Leaf cut outs template

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