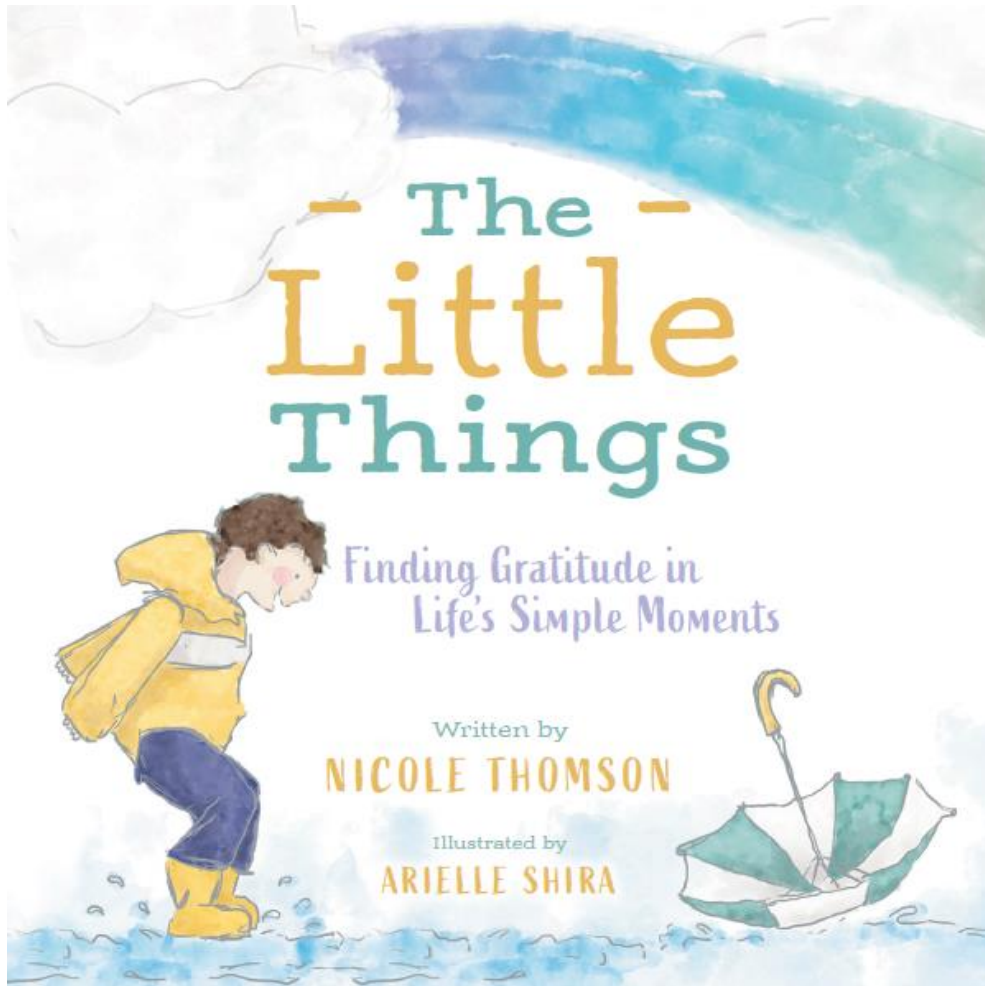


“The Little Things” by Nicole Thomson

Accompanying Lesson on Gratitude
Grade 1-6



“The Little Things” by Nicole Thomson - Accompanying Lesson

Overview of lesson:

- Introduce the word and meaning of gratitude
- What the research says
- Story and optional video
- Students write something they are grateful for

Materials:

- Post-it notes and pens/pencils
- Story and video

Background info for teachers:

There have been multiple studies proving the benefits of practicing gratitude on people's overall happiness and health. (Benefits include feeling happier, more optimistic, and patient; being able to make better decisions; decreases blood pressure and stress and helps with better sleeping patterns; improves self esteem and resilience, improves relationships and feelings of empathy.) The concept of gratitude has been around for hundreds of years, and its benefits have been expressed by some of the most remarkable and successful people in history (Ghandi, The Dalai Lama, Oprah Winfrey, JFK, Tony Robbins, Ariana Huffington, and Walt Disney to name a few). According to the world's leading gratitude researcher Robert Emmons, gratitude is an “affirmation of goodness where we affirm that there are good things in the world.”

Feeling grateful for the things that make us happy increases the "feel good" chemicals in our brain, dopamine and serotonin. When we have more of these chemicals, we are happier, more optimistic, energetic, and empathetic.

In addition to these feel good chemicals, gratitude increases our frequency. We are made up of energy, just like everything in the entire universe. Our thoughts are made up of energy and they vibrate at a certain frequency. The higher the frequency, the better we feel. We are in a state of high frequency when we experience positive emotions (happy, excited, grateful, energetic, proud). We are in a state of lower frequency when we feel negative emotions (fear, anger, frustration, jealousy, greed). Whatever frequency our thoughts are at sends those vibrations out to the universe and we attract back to us things on that frequency. We will attract experiences to match our thoughts and feelings.

So let's get our students (and ourselves) on that high frequency so they can attract more positive experiences, opportunities and people into their lives.

Book:



You can find the eBook here:

<https://books.friesenpress.com/store/title/119734000153127758/Nicole-Thomson-The-Little-Things>

Or order paperback or hardcover online anywhere books are sold.

Additional optional videos:

Gratitude HD - Moving Art™ (6 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nj2ofrX7jAk&x-yt-cl=84924572&x-yts=1422411861&feature=player_detailpage&ab_channel=MovingArt

Say Thank You (Denzel Washington) (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uzynHWxn5Q>

Rocket Kids - 10 Things to be thankful for (4 mins) :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6zL3CtYG6Q>

Kid President - 25 things to be thankful for (3.5 mins):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yA5Qpt1JRE4>

Lesson:

1. Ask students what they know about the word *gratitude*. Write answers on the board.
2. Explain that gratitude is a quality of being thankful. You can feel a sense of gratitude when you are thankful (grateful) for the things and people around you. You can express gratitude for people, animals, objects, experiences, ideas, things in nature...absolutely anything.
3. Ask students to think of a time when they felt thankful for something or someone in their lives. Depending on the grade level, you could have a discussion around things we take

for granted each day and don't really think about (i.e. a roof over our head, food to eat, a caring guardian who loves us, clean water to drink, the chance to go to school).

4. Read "The Little Things: Finding Gratitude in Life's Simple Moments".
5. Hand out a post-it to each student to have them write down one thing that they're grateful for. You can supplement this by having students watch one of the recommended videos to give students more inspiration and ideas.
6. Discussion
 - Ask students: What did you notice? What did you think about the story/video? What are you wondering? How did it make you feel/How are you feeling now?
 - Science has proven that when we feel a sense of gratitude it has many benefits to our mood and even our health. (Some benefits were listed in the background info above)
 - Feeling grateful actually changes our brain (for the better!) by releasing "feel good" chemicals (dopamine and serotonin). When we feel grateful, we are happier, more optimistic, compassionate and friendly.
 - Try it: Sit for a few seconds/a minute, close your eyes and just envision that person or thing or experience you wrote down that you are thankful for. Focus on that and tell yourself how grateful you are. Spend a few moments in silence doing this....
 - How were you feeling while you did that? How do you feel right now?
 - You can use this practice anytime during the day to boost your mood!

Extension:

- Start a daily gratitude journal with your students. A consist practice will build a habit of gratitude. I have 30 Days of Gratitude prompts that will deliver right to your inbox each day for 30 days that you can implement in your classroom to get this practice started. You can get that here: <https://view.flodesk.com/pages/6006ca0270c68866423aeb59>

I hope your class enjoys this introduction to gratitude. I would love to hear from you about how it went. You can email me at nthomson@thefulfilledclassroom.com or through my website.

Nicole



www.thefulfilledclassroom.com