

**Note:** This sample curriculum is only week 1 of a 4-week Module.

# → YOU MATTER CURRICULUM

A NEW TYPE OF  
CURRICULUM  
FOR A NEW KIND OF  
STUDENT.

**Note:** This sample curriculum is only week 1 of a 4-week Module.

GREAT AT GRATITUDE



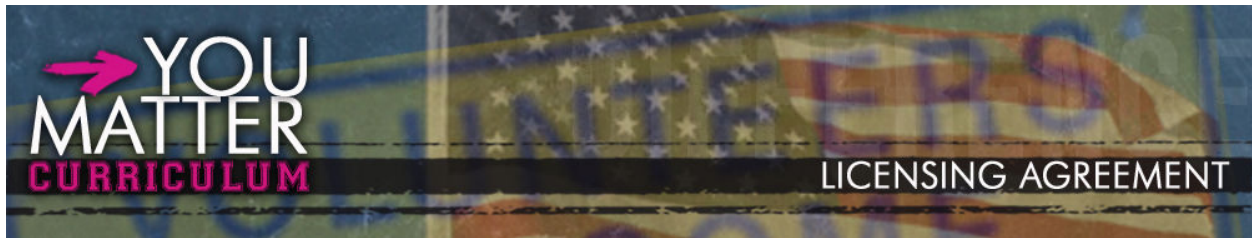
GRADES 6-8

SOCIAL AWARENESS LEADERSHIP MAKING A DIFFERENCE YOUTH ACTIVISTS



GREAT AT GRATEFULNESS  
GRADES 6-8  
Facilitator's Guide

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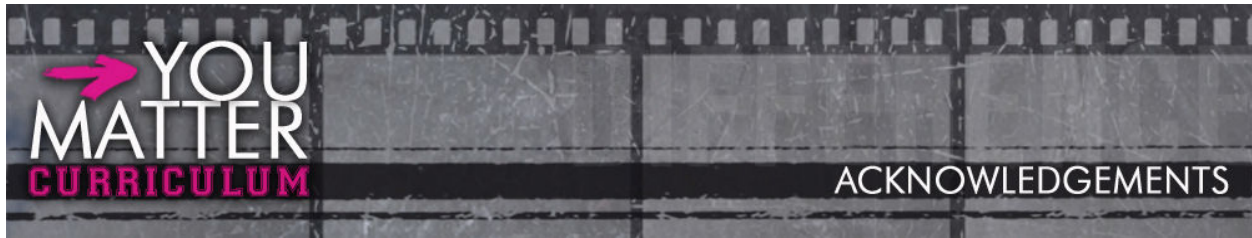


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We thank those who contributed to the creation of the YOU MATTER™ Curriculum. Through idea formation, writing, promoting, inspiring, or just plain believing, you have had a significant impact on the launching of this curriculum. Because of you, youth all across the country are now learning the valuable message that THEY MATTER and that they can make a difference in their schools, communities, and the world, at large.

Thank you for your contributions. It has been a pleasure working with you; and, we look forward to doing so for many Mondays to come.

YOU MATTER.

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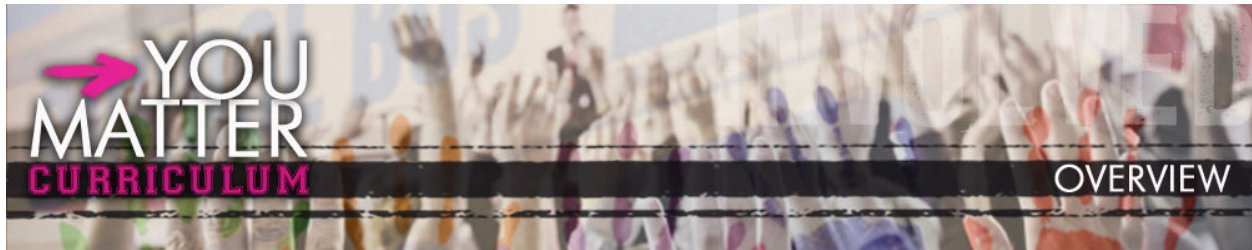
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And, to all the teachers who have shaped our lives and the lives of millions of children—YOU MATTER.



## The Situation

“Thank You!” “You mean a lot to me!” “I appreciate you!” “I love you!” These are the building blocks for relating with people and some of the most heart-warming words a person can hear. But, in today’s fast-paced, stressed-out world, sometimes these words never get communicated. Is it a matter of people just not feeling them? Probably not. Or, that it sounds strange to say them? No. Then why have they become so rare? The fact is that feeling appreciated is one of the strongest human desires, and we are going to generate as much of it as we can.

## The Mission

Over the next four weeks, we are going to spread gratitude in as many ways as possible. By creating personal journals, exchanging tokens of appreciation, writing thank you letters, and documenting gratitude on campus, our school will have a new appreciation for appreciation. And, not only will our school be affected, but we are an integral part of creating the world’s longest gratitude list. We have a lot to be grateful for...we just need to give it some attention.

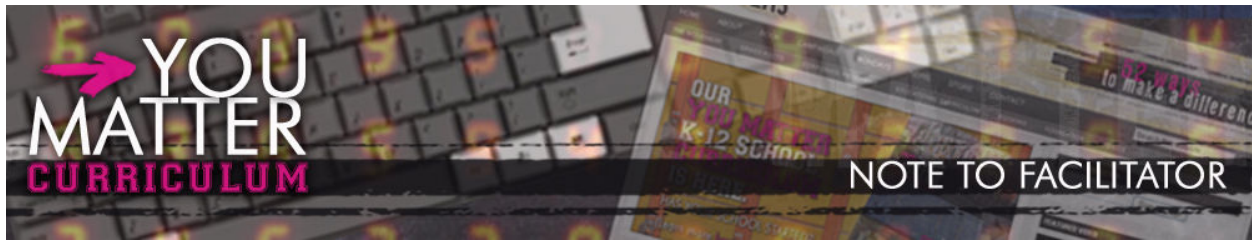
## The Plan

- **Week 1: The Gratitude Journals:** How many different things do we think about on a daily basis? How many of those thoughts are positive? How many are negative? More specifically, how often do we think about things in our life for which we are grateful? This week, we are not only going to think about them, but we are going to write them down as well...every single day. And, we are going to get the entire school to do the same thing.
- **Week 2: The Bracelet Exchange:** Gratitude can be both received and expressed. It’s important for us to be good at both. If someone tells us they appreciate us, we need to know how to respond. And, we need to know how to tell someone else that we appreciate them. This week, we are going to exchange a small token of appreciation and learn how to complete the gratitude chain.
- **Week 3: Group Gratitude:** Oftentimes, gratitude can be shared with large groups of people. Groups that may not get the appreciation they deserve

because people are not sure how to show it to them. How do you thank the police department or the military? How about the White House? This week, we are going to pick two groups and let them know how much we care. We are going to create and deliver a gratitude message that will guarantee they know how much they are appreciated.

- **Week 4: Documenting Gratitude:** For three weeks, we have personally focused on ways to spread and receive gratitude and appreciation. We have also asked our entire school to share with us why they are grateful. This week, we are going to bring their journal entries to life by creating a gratitude video. We are also going to create a constant reminder for ourselves so we never forget the importance of being grateful.

Appreciation, being appreciated, feeling appreciated, and giving appreciation are so powerful that many friendships, marriages, and family relations end because one person feels underappreciated. To have a friend, partner, spouse, or family member that expresses appreciation and appreciates what you do is a gift. Let's always be that gift.



## Tactics

In fulfilling this four-week mission, please choose one of the following tactics:

1. Use the lesson plan that follows.
2. Create your own plan.
3. Choose a hybrid approach by selecting parts of the lesson plan and incorporating them with your or your students' ideas.

## The YOU MATTER Challenges

These challenges are an important part of this curriculum. They will allow you to access your students' prior knowledge, as well as see how much they learn during this four-week module. The **YOU MATTER Challenge 1** should be the first thing done with the class (before launching into any of the curriculum or showing the video). **Challenge 2** should be the last thing done with the class. Please write the scores from both challenges on the **YOU MATTER Challenge Scorecard** and fax it to: 949.640.6762.

## The Video

Each four-week curriculum module has a unique **YOU MATTER Video** that provides an initial awareness of that month's subject matter. The video is on the DVD on the left side of the DVD case. Please show the video immediately following the **YOU MATTER Challenge 1**.

## The FACTS

We also recommend using the **FACTS** sheet offered on the next page. Providing this information to your class, either by reading it aloud or giving each of them a copy, will greatly aid their learning process during their mission. Students will be able to utilize the information from this sheet on a weekly basis.

## Your YOU MATTER Class Profile

The **YOU MATTER Class Profile** is an online profile for you and your class to build. This profile is your opportunity to show the rest of the world how your class is making a difference. Upload photos and videos, write blog entries, and share your successes with the rest of the schools around the country that are making their Mondays matter. Enjoy building and maintaining your online classroom. To access and build your profile, please go to [www.everymondaysmatters.com](http://www.everymondaysmatters.com) and click on the *Class Profiles* link in the top menu.



### **Gratitude Impacts to the Brain, Body, and Spirit**

- The power of gratitude releases the negativity in our mind. All functions and feelings of the body are controlled by the brain. When we express gratitude for things our brain feels positive.
- Feeling appreciated is one of the strongest human desires.
- A 25% increase in happiness can result from the daily practice of gratitude.
- People that practice gratitude are found to be more compassionate, more likely to help others, less materialistic, and more satisfied with life.
- A key element in every person who is truly happy is: They are grateful for all that they can be grateful for. A grateful person is a joyful person.
- Cultivating gratitude brings other health effects, such as longer and better quality sleep time, alertness, optimism, better progress toward goals, and feeling more loved.

### **Electronic Media as a Way of Communicating**

- 175% more text messages are sent each month compared to phone calls.
- 45% of social media users say they've used their cell phone to break up with someone—mostly via text message.
- 73% of cell phone users say that the cell phone is the most important device in their social life.
- 66% of U.S. Internet users said email was their preferred channel for written communications between friends.
- With e-mail, text messaging, and instant messaging, a handwritten note is getting rarer and therefore more special.

### **Creating Gratitude**

- A few hours spent writing in a gratitude journal over three weeks can create positive effects that last six months, if not longer.
- There is warmth in a handwritten note—it instantly makes the message more personal and intimate; and, it makes the recipient feel more valued.
- The most requested item by military men and women is a letter. Active military members are deployed for long periods of time. They love receiving good wishes and words of appreciation, even from total strangers.
- A handwritten note costs less than a dollar to write and mail, and the relational value is priceless.
- The recipient can keep and reread a handwritten note forever.



### **Reading**

- ☑ Summarize main points, present facts and opinions, explain imaginary elements
- ☑ Use reading strategies including pre-reading, re-reading, checking comprehension, using prior knowledge, using reference materials, and asking peers and teachers for help
- ☑ Read and follow multi-step directions

### **Writing and Grammar**

- ☑ Use techniques such as brainstorming, pre-writing, drafting, editing, revising, and re-writing
- ☑ Write strong closing paragraphs
- ☑ Edit for content, structure, grammar, and punctuation
- ☑ Follow guidelines and meet deadlines
- ☑ Write for functional purposes, including writing detailed instructions, letters, and forms and applications

### **Speaking and Listening**

- ☑ Give appropriate feedback

### **Technology**

- ☑ Risks and benefits of technology



**Preparation Time:** 15 minutes

**Lesson:** 60 minutes

### Materials

- Computer with LCD projector or TV with DVD player
- Art supplies for **Personal YOU MATTER Gratitude Journal** creation:
  - Construction paper or colored card stock
  - Colored pens/Pencils
  - Glitter
  - Glue
  - String/Yarn
  - Stapler
  - Hole puncher
  - Binding tools
  - Pipe cleaners
  - Blank sheets or lined white paper
- The **YOU MATTER Gratitude School Journal** (provided with curriculum)
- Handouts:
  - **Great at Gratefulness: YOU MATTER Challenge 1**
  - **Great at Gratefulness: A Letter Home**
  - **FACTS**
- Facilitator's Notes:
  - Copy of the **Overview**
  - Copy of the **YOU MATTER Challenge Scorecard**
- Video:
  - **Great at Gratefulness**

### Preparation

1. Determine if you will be partnering with other classes or grades to create your gratitude program. Determine the roles and responsibilities of each facilitator and class.
2. Print and copy the following handouts (1 for each student):
  - **Great at Gratefulness: YOU MATTER Challenge 1**
  - **Great at Gratefulness: A Letter Home**
  - **FACTS**

3. Set up computer and LCD projector or TV with DVD player in preparation to play the **Great at Gratefulness** video.
4. Print the **Overview** to read to the class.
5. Print the **YOU MATTER Challenge Scorecard**.
6. Have art supplies ready and accessible.
7. Have the **YOU MATTER Gratitude School Journal** ready for students.

## THE MISSION STARTS NOW

### Part 1: Reveal the Mission

1. Launch this month's YOU MATTER™ Mission by giving the **Great at Gratefulness: YOU MATTER Challenge 1**. This is an opportunity to check for prior knowledge. Students will be given the same challenge at the end of the fourth week to measure their learning. It is important to collect and grade both challenges and enter the scores on the **YOU MATTER Challenge Scorecard**. Once you have entered the scores from both challenges, fax it to 949.640.6762.
2. Read the entire **Overview** to students.
3. Re-read this week's plan from the **Overview**.  
*How many different things do we think about on a daily basis? How many of those thoughts are positive? How many are negative? More specifically, how often do we think about things in our life for which we are grateful? This week, we are not only going to think about them, but we are going to write them down as well...every single day. And, we are going to get the entire school to do the same thing.*
4. Show the **Great at Gratefulness** video.

### Part 2: Discussing Gratitude

1. Ask students to share different ways people can show gratitude and appreciation.
2. Have students share personal stories where they have either offered appreciation or been extended appreciation by someone else.
3. Ask students why they think being grateful and sharing it is so important. Hand out the **FACTS** sheet to help further the discussion.

### Part 3: Building the Personal YOU MATTER Gratitude Journals

1. Share with students that today they are going to create their own personal gratitude journals.
2. Give students the following guidelines:
  - The journals should be five or more pages long.
  - Students should create and decorate a cover for their journal. Make sure students include their name on the cover.

- Students should then bind the cover to the inside blank pages to create their book/journal.
3. Once the journals are made, students will have one job...they need to write one thing for which they are grateful every day when they come to class. This needs to be the first thing they do. Have students' journals out on their desks upon arrival. Also, keep the journals in the class at all times, so students don't possibly lose them.
  4. Have students write their first entry. (Note: entries can be short—just a few words are fine.)

#### **Part 4: Starting the YOU MATTER Gratitude School Journal**

1. Share with students that they are a part of making the world's longest gratitude list and that they have to try to get as many people to write one thing for which they are grateful in the journal.
2. Show them the **YOU MATTER Gratitude School Journal**.
3. Pass it around the class and have each student write one thing in the journal.
4. Figure out a plan with students as to how they are going to circulate the journal around campus. A suggested plan is to communicate with the teachers during school to have them have their students write entries and then pass it along to another classroom. By the end of the month, hopefully every classroom will have had an opportunity to write in it.
5. To be part of the world's longest gratitude list, once the month is over, get the filled-in journal and mail it back to Every Monday Matters at: 8223 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Los Angeles, CA 90048. Every Monday Matters will also help bring it to life and share it with the world.

#### **Part 5: A Letter Home**

1. This is an opportunity for students to write a letter of appreciation to their parents or legal guardians. We want to first extend gratitude into the home.
2. Hand out a copy of the **Great at Gratefulness: A Letter Home**. Read the letter aloud with the class or have a student read it.
3. Share with students what they will be doing.

4. Provide students with the same art supplies that they used for creating their personal journals.
5. Give students the following guidelines:
  - They can write whatever they want—as long or short as they want.
  - Make sure to include the name of who it is going to and to sign their name at the bottom.
6. Tell students to deliver the letters when they get home from school.

### **Homework**

1. Deliver the handwritten letter of appreciation to their family/guardian.

### **Extension**

1. Have students get their family/guardian to also start a gratitude journal for the month.
2. Have students perform one random act of kindness every day for the week.



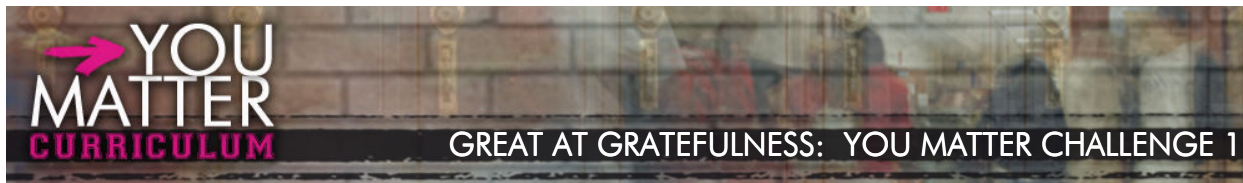
**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer the following 10 questions.**

1. Gratitude causes which of the following health benefits?
  - a. Longer and better quality sleep
  - b. Alertness
  - c. Optimism
  - d. Increased productivity
  - e. All of the above
  
2. Which are ways to show appreciation and respect?
  - a. Open a door for someone
  - b. Write a thank you letter
  - c. Cut in front of someone in line
  - d. All of the above
  - e. a and b only
  
3. What is the one of the strongest human desires?
  - a. To be taller
  - b. To feel appreciated
  - c. To get a new job
  - d. To get a pet
  
4. Showing appreciation and gratitude has a positive effect on:
  - a. The person receiving it
  - b. The person showing it
  - c. People watching the exchange of gratitude
  - d. All the above
  
5. What is the most requested item by U.S. military men and women?
  - a. Food
  - b. Handwritten letters
  - c. Music
  - d. Photos
  - e. None of the above

6. What is the best form of communication to use for telling someone they are important to you?
  - a. Text
  - b. Email
  - c. Phone
  - d. In Person
  
7. What percentage of people chooses email as their preferred form of written communication between friends?
  - a. 25%
  - b. 33%
  - c. 50%
  - d. 66%
  - e. 75%
  
8. Which of these statements is true?
  - a. People receive 175% more text messages than phone calls.
  - b. People receive 100% more phone calls than text messages.
  - c. People receive more handwritten letters than text messages and phone calls combined.
  - d. People receive more handwritten letters than phone calls.
  
9. Writing in a gratitude journal for 3 weeks can create lasting positive effects for:
  - a. 3 weeks
  - b. 9 weeks
  - c. 15 weeks
  - d. 24 weeks
  
10. Brain scans show that:
  - a. Gratitude increases blood flow to the brain
  - b. Gratitude decreases blood flow to the brain
  - c. Gratitude has no effect on blood flow to the brain
  - d. Increased blood flow to the brain gives positive feelings
  - e. a & d



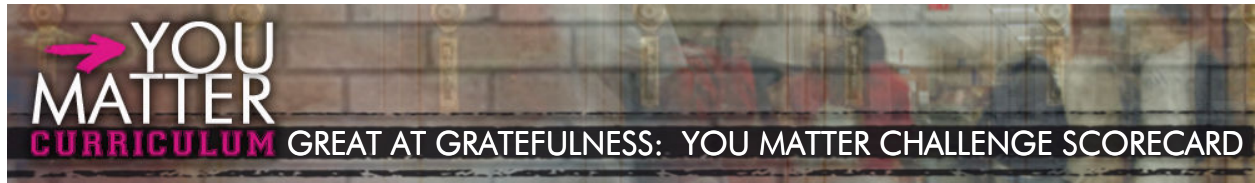
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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

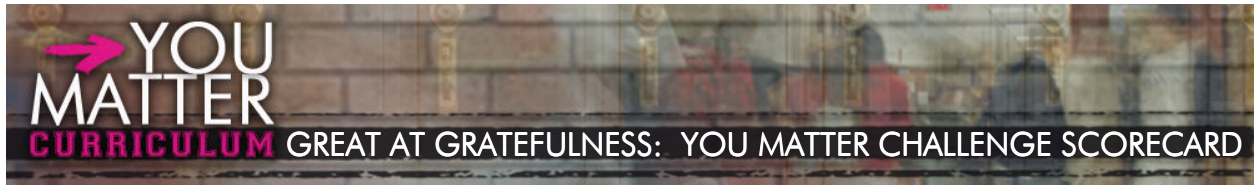
Facilitator Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List the results by student of the YOU MATTER Challenge 1 and Challenge 2. In the Knowledge Gained column, identify the improvement in score with a plus (+) or a decline in score with a minus (-). When completed, fax results to 949.640.6762 (no cover sheet is required).

	Name or Initials	YOU MATTER Challenge 1 Results	YOU MATTER Challenge 2 Results	Knowledge Gained
1	K.B.	4	10	+6
2	M.B.	2	10	+8
3	M.E.	5	9	+4
4	G.E.	3	8	+5
5	F.G.	7	10	+3
6	N.H.	2	9	+7
7	P.J.	6	5	-1
8	M.M.	5	8	+3
9	J.N.	8	10	+2
10	J.W.	4	10	+6



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List the results by student of the YOU MATTER Challenge 1 and Challenge 2. In the Knowledge Gained column, identify the improvement in score with a plus (+) or a decline in score with a minus (-). When completed, fax results to 949.640.6762 (no cover sheet is required).

	Name or Initials	YOU MATTER Challenge 1 Results	YOU MATTER Challenge 2 Results	Knowledge Gained
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Dear Family Member/Guardian,

I am writing you this letter to let you know how much I appreciate you. I know that I probably don't share this enough with you. You mean so much to me.

When I get stressed about how much school work I have, you are always there to help me calm down.

When I've been hurt by a friend, you've always been there to hold my hand and give me advice.

When I play volleyball, you always support me in getting me to practices on time, buying the equipment I need, and coming to my games and cheering on our team.

Thank you for everything you do. I really appreciate it.

You matter.

Love,  
Sandy