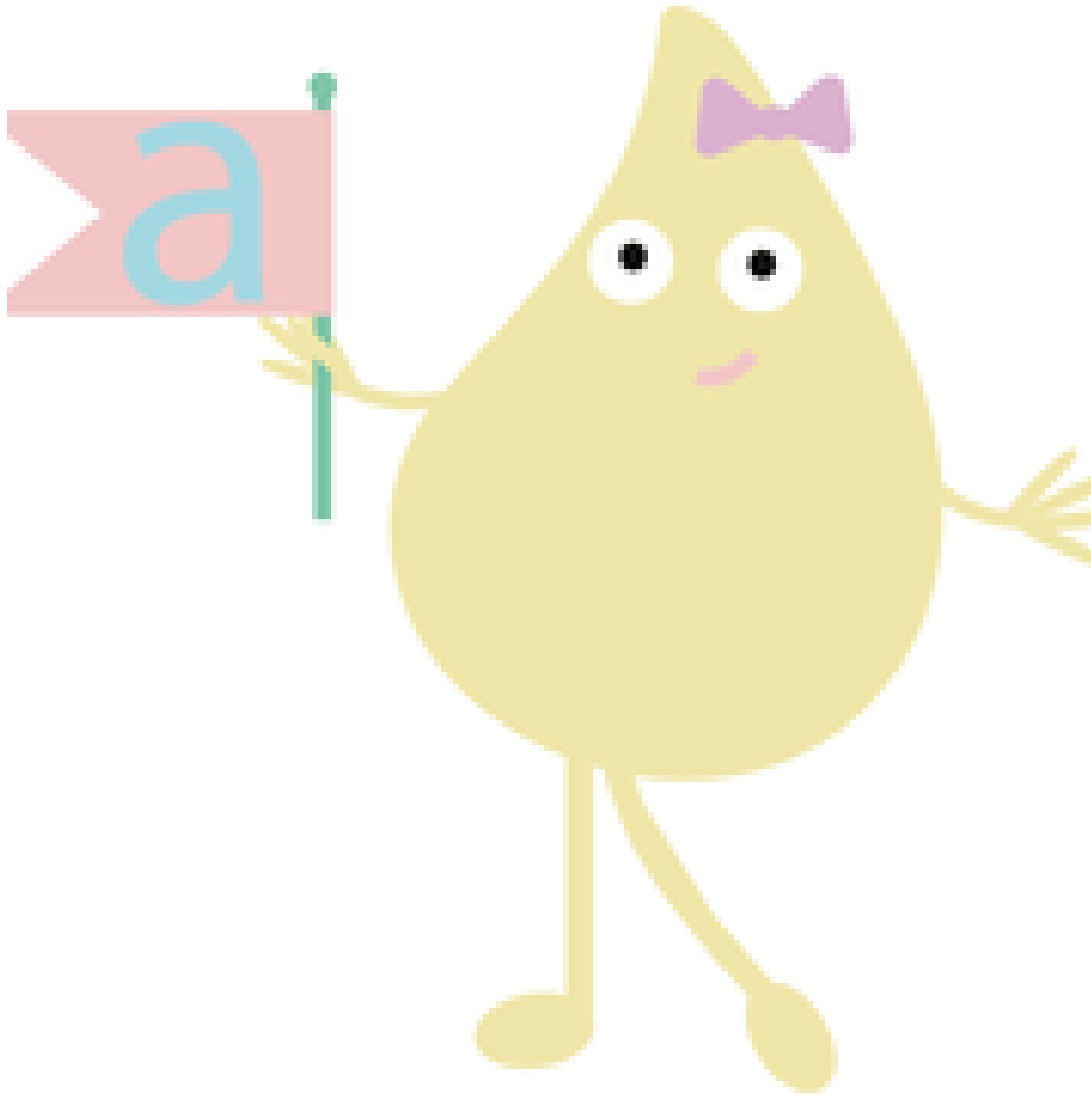




Teach Your Class: Appreciate

Year 5

Appreciate



The Appreciate module is all about learning the importance of appreciating yourself, others and experiences.

Appreciate - Module overview

This module is all about teaching children the importance of gratitude. It looks at a number of elements of gratitude including:

- What happens in our brain when we give and receive gratitude. We link this back to the science of the brain covered in the 'Meet Your Brain' module and critically, the dopamine release that happens when gratitude is given, or received.
- The gratitude wheel - this is a way to think about the types of gratitude that children should try to take the time to notice:
 - **Yourself** - this is really focussed around building self esteem. By continuing to focus on character strengths the children are encouraged to think about what they appreciate about themselves or, their top strengths.
 - **Others** - children are encouraged to stop and reflect about who in their lives they appreciate and why. The strengths lens can be used here again to really deepen their sense of why they appreciate others and what their strengths are.
 - **Experiences** - using happy breathing as a vehicle here, children are encouraged to stop and think about the simple, everyday experiences that they have e.g. eating, listening etc.

This module includes a fair amount of reflection and is very much about the children learning to develop what we call an 'attitude of gratitude'. An attitude of gratitude is best described as taking the time to stop and think about all there is to be grateful for.

The research shows that regularly doing this has a hugely positive impact on mental wellbeing. If you are able to develop a habit whereby students share their gratitude with one another this is fantastic.

Extension activities and top tips

This module presents plenty of opportunities to link to the broader curriculum for example thinking about how characters in a book show gratitude or looking for opportunities to show gratitude within the classroom setting.

In this module, the children are encouraged to do a lot of self reflection on what and who they appreciate and to record their thoughts in their myHappyMind journal.

If you have children for whom this may be difficult another option is to do this work in small groups with or without the support of teaching staff.

Using the strengths lens is a really positive way to get children thinking about gratitude and helps to further embed their understanding of character strengths and why they matter.

In this module, children are encouraged to share their feelings of gratitude with each other. This may feel unusual for some children but the more that this is built in to the daily routines the easier it will be. Feeling able and being willing to tell others why they are grateful to them is very powerful for the giver and the receiver.

Another useful activity is to start a 'gratitude jar' each day, week or whatever frequency you feel works best of your class you can ask each child to capture something they are grateful for.

You could make this about learning or more general. Then, after a period of time you could open the jar and display all of the things the children have captured. This is a visual and impactful way of showing the power of gratitude.

Happy breathing:

The happy breathing exercises in this module are provided in script form so that you, or a member of your team can deliver them. This is an important evolution for the children as it shows the habit forming and it is powerful for you to role model this activity.

The scripts are simple and short, we recommend a slow pace with lots of pausing but you'll know the right speed for your class. The beauty of this approach is that you can take the happy breathing exercises wherever you would like.

It can be particularly impactful and memorable to do some of the activities outside of the classroom for example, a listening happy breathing exercise outside or a tasting happy breathing exercise in the lunch hall.

Feel free to use your imagination with this. There are a number of options and you are welcome to try which ever you feel is right for the day of the mind workout. We encourage that you cover off at least 2 of the senses over the module though.

The exercises can be found on the myHappyMind learning portal.

Key resources;

myHappyMind journals which include ;

- The happy breathing exercises to be found in the appendix
- Plenty of space for reflection via words or pictures
- Gratitude wheel spinner

Specific notes for each Mind Workout (MWO):

MWO 1

There is a happy breathing exercise in this MWO so please select which script you would like to use in advance. The children will need their journals for this MWO. This MWO contains a fair amount of group discussion, you may choose to define these groups ahead of time.

MWO 2

There is a happy breathing exercise in this MWO so please select which script you would like to use in advance. The children will need their journals for this MWO. There is also a short piece of group work in this MWO for the children to experience and practice giving and receiving gratitude, it may be worth pre-assigning groups.

MWO 3

There is a happy breathing exercise in this MWO so please select which script you would like to use in advance. The children will need their journals for this MWO.

MWO 4

There is a happy breathing exercise in this MWO so please select which script you would like to use in advance. The children will need their journals for this MWO. There is a lot of self reflection and individual work in this session, you may wish to bear this in mind as you plan the timing of this MWO.

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*"Feeling gratitude and not
expressing it is like receiving
a present and not opening it."*

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