

THE KI REPORT

A newsletter on Kindness and Inclusion for Root Elementary parents and families.

Character Word of the Month: Gratitude

An expression of thankfulness or appreciation.

Lessons from Lavender

The Root character word for November is Gratitude. During counseling time we'll talk about what gratitude means, and how it helps us in our daily lives. The Blast definition that students will hear in their classrooms is: Gratitude - student expressing thankfulness or appreciation. I will be talking with them about how having and showing gratitude can build stronger relationships, help us sleep better, and help overcome frustration. It's important to teach your children to be grateful for what their bodies can do (walk, hear, see, smell, learn, sleep, eat, etc.) and also what they have with family and friends (love, encouragement, trust, etc.). Read a book with your child and talk about gratitude. Spend time at the dinner table taking turns saying things that make you grateful.

"Gratitude and attitude are not challenges; they are choices" - Robert Braathe

Reading suggestions:

Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are - Dr. Seuss

The Giving Tree - Shel Silverstein

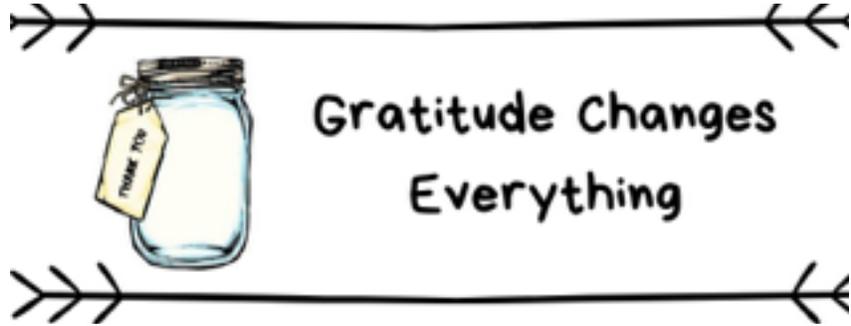
Could Always Be Worse - Margot Zemach

All the World - Liz Garton Scanlon

Bear Says Thanks - Karma Wilson

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lavender



Gratitude Changes Everything

As we embark on yet another holiday season, we often find ourselves sharing a table with friends and loved ones with whom we may not always see eye to eye. Our patience and ability to empathize with those special people in our lives may be put to the ultimate test. Uncle Jerry may like to bring up politics; Aunt Belinda may come across extra bossy as she coordinates the outgoing Thanksgiving dishes; and yes, some of us may find ourselves particularly lonely on this fast approaching Thanksgiving Day as we struggle to find any relatives or friends to even have the luxury of perceiving untactful. So this brings us to a special word known to many of us, but practiced more rarely than we care to admit.....GRATITUDE.

What if we flipped our thinking and focused on the people and things for which we're grateful? Gratitude has been scientifically proven to improve our relationships, overall wellbeing, our ability to empathize with others, and even our ability to manage adverse experiences (Boggio, and colleagues, 2019; Wood and colleagues, 2007, 2019; Psychology Science, 2014). However, to have a positive impact, it requires daily practice and intentionality. Take a moment to reflect on the ways that you practice gratitude. How often do you give thanks? What people have positively impacted your life in the past and present? How often do you express your gratitude? What resources do you have readily available to you that positively impact your life?

A great way to transfer this thinking to your entire family is by creating a Gratitude Jar. It doesn't have to be a jar. It could be any cup, bowl, box, etc., but here's how you can put it to use:

1. *Get a jar, cup, or bowl.*
2. *Cut strips of paper, paper bag, or whatever you have available to write on.*
3. *Use a pen, pencil, or crayon to write ANYTHING at all for which you feel grateful.*
4. *Encourage everyone to add to the jar everyday.*
5. *At Thanksgiving or the end of the year, share with your friends and loved ones what you've collected.*