

Gratitude Garden

2016 Ms. Cretera's Garden Parents
Outdoor Lesson #7 - 11.16.2016
Liz Kelly, Maggie Overfelt-Valentine, Lara Shihab-Eldin

Objective: Talk about Gratitude ahead of thanksgiving, get the kids to move and think about what they are grateful for while being outdoors

Time/location: The entire lesson can be done in 30-40 minutes.

Materials: Foraged pruned, leafless branches, jar, pebbles..

Book: All the World, Thank You Thanksgiving

The Lesson:

Part 1 / Gratitude Movement Circle

Start with a movement circle: each kid says something they are thankful for and does a movement that the others respond to by replicating the word & movement.

Part 2 /Gratitude Books & Discussion

All the World

Thank You Thanksgiving?

Part 3 / Forage and build

-collect the foraged branches to stick in a pebbled jar or two to help build a gratitude tree.

-Deep Breath Pause: Breathe in the air just the way the roots absorb in the water, feel it go to all parts of your body, (feel the water going up your trunk, into your branches, out to the leaves, make food, and evaporate) and breath out.

Part 4 / Gratitude Leaves

Each child will receive a gratitude leaf to write or draw something that they are grateful for and tie it onto the tree.

Part 5 /Journey to the Gratitude Garden

<http://alldonemonkey.com/tag/gratitude-activity/>

And now for the main event. You can always do this activity alone, but I think creating the Thankfulness Tree first helps kids start thinking in the right direction, plus it provides a visual reminder during the game of things they are thankful for.

This is intended as a group activity.

Start the Journey: Stand up in front of the group, with the Thankfulness Tree in clear view. Explain that you are all going on a trip to the Grateful Garden, but to get there you have to go through three dangerous TOUGH places! (Insert a word other than "dangerous" if more appropriate to the age group). The Thankfulness Tree will help you get through each one so you can make it to the Grateful Garden.

The Frowny Forest: The first stop is the Frowny Forest. Have the kids all mimic you as you frown, cross your arms, and hunch over. There is a lot of wind in the Frowny Forest, so mimic being tossed about by the wind, turning back and forth as if you are trying to fight it. The only way to leave the Frowny Forest is to feel happy again, so ask the kids to shout out things they are grateful for (using the Thankfulness Tree as a prompt). After they have named a few things, mimic great relief, with a big smile.

The Sad Swamp: But, oh no! Just beyond the Frowny Forest is the Sad Swamp! Hunch over again, swing your arms down low, and walk (in place) in big, heavy steps, as if walking through mud or water. Again, have the kids shout out things they are grateful for, so you can all leave the Sad Swamp.

The Mad Mountain: Past the Sad Swamp is the Mad Mountain. Have them imitate you as you pretend to climb up the mountain with great effort, making angry faces. Again, have the kids shout out things they are grateful for, so you can all feel happy again.

The Grateful Garden: Finally, you have all arrived at the Grateful Garden! What a good job they have done! To celebrate, everyone can do a Happy Hop!