



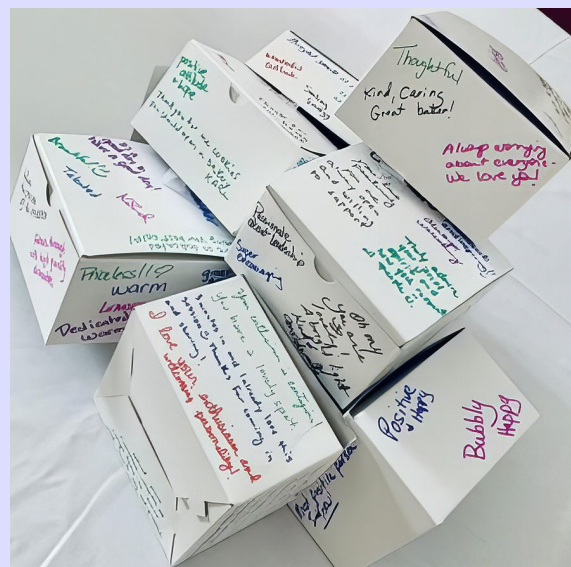
Celebrating Life's Beautiful Journey with Gratitude



Heather Lageman for xSEleratED

This time of year is one of my favorites - counting blessings, coming together with loved ones, baking cookies, laughing and crying at old memories and making new ones, and welcoming in the New Year. It is the perfect opportunity to give the gift of gratitude and connection. Creating gratitude gift boxes is one of my favorite activities to do throughout the year because it is so personal, heart-felt, and meaningful. There is so much power and beauty in words - they can help build us up, lift our spirits, make us feel seen and valued.

In the fast pace and busyness of the world and our lives, we don't always take the time to tell each other how we feel about one another. Every year I rekindle my resolve to live my core value of gratitude, and these boxes have become a tradition at all kinds of gatherings and celebrations. Using words to convey gratitude is one of the greatest gifts we give to others, and it brings joy to both the giver and receiver. Having a treasure box to pick up when I need comfort or a boost has made all the difference in the ups and downs of life. It makes the journey all the more beautiful to know I am on it with amazing people who are a source of light and love ... and they see the same in me.



Here are the steps to create gratitude gift boxes:

1. Buy small foldable cardboard gift boxes (5x5x2) and an assortment of colorful markers.
2. Assemble the boxes and place a small treat in each box - a sweet treat, quote, ornament - something personal and memorable.
3. Write each person's first name on the top of the box.
4. Place them on a table and play some festive music!
5. Invite each person to walk around with a colorful marker in hand and stop at each of the gift boxes.
6. Reflect on each person's name and write a positive word or a phrase that comes to mind when you think of that person, a memory, an expression of gratitude, and/or words of encouragement.
7. Invite everyone to return to their seats and read their gift. Let them know there is a special treat inside the box for later.

During the holiday season and throughout the year, may we all create the space and grace to connect with those we treasure and share the positive energy and collective brilliance that comes from deep connection and love. One of the greatest presents we can give is our presence - taking the time to tell people how much they mean to us by our words and actions. It is a gift that keeps giving throughout the year - the power of possibility thrives when everyone feels valued and heard, and knows that they matter. Here's to another year of celebrating life's beautiful journey!

More Joy!

Continue to celebrate the spirit of season with these additional resources to share gratitude. Let us know if you try any of these, or share one of your own with all Worthy Educator members!

Gratitude Ping Pong

All you need is a ping pong (or even a bouncy ball) to play gratitude ping pong. It's fun and energizing - throw/bounce it and each time you catch it, you share something that you are grateful for. Try to get a rhythm going, and share as many unique things each of you are thankful for as possible. Here's a quick [video](#) of the amazing Sara Corckran and Erin Baldecchi modeling the activity for teams too!

Gratitude Letter

The beauty of gratitude is that it benefits both you and the person you are grateful for. We can choose to be the light of positivity that people need right now, and it starts in our own lives. Reach out on a daily basis by sending a gratitude – use e-cards, texts, quotes, or actual greeting cards/letters – to tell those who have a positive impact in your lives how much they matter to you. It will fill your heart as well as theirs.

Joy Drop

Happy YOUNiversity has a **Joy Drop** activity that is memorable and powerful. It is about inspiring kindness in your community and how JOY begins with you. Start by spreading a drop of JOY to an unsuspecting person and inspire them to pass it on by leaving a “Joy Drop card”. Here’s a sample so you can print some or get creative and make your own - personalizing with your unique message. Then watch how a single act of kindness can turn into a waterfall of kindness and connection in your community.

