

My Thankful Hand - Levels C & D

CREATIVE

To support the life skill of gratitude through a reflective and creative activity where students represent things they are thankful for on their own hand. Inspired by Saturn, this activity reinforces the idea that many small things, like fingers on a hand, come together to create strength, beauty, and connection.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to recognise and think about things in their life they feel thankful for.

Students aim to express gratitude through drawing, symbols, or simple words.

Students aim to share or acknowledge their gratitude in ways that feel safe and comfortable.



Success Criteria

I can trace or use a hand template to create my Thankful Hand.

I can show one thing I am thankful for on each finger using drawings, symbols, or words.

I can choose to share some of my thankful ideas with others.



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Duration: 15 - 20 minutes

Objective

To support the life skill of gratitude through a reflective and creative activity where students represent things they are thankful for on their own hand. Inspired by Saturn, this activity reinforces the idea that many small things, like fingers on a hand, come together to create strength, beauty, and connection.

Players

Individual activity

Suitable for 4 - 26 students

Optional sharing in pairs or as a group

What You Need

A4 paper (plain or coloured)

Pre-drawn large hand templates (recommended for Levels C-D but not essential)

Coloured pencils

Optional: stickers, glitter, scissors, glue, stamps.

AAC devices or communication boards as required

Setup

1. Revisit the Saturn page from *The Playful Astronauts* using clear, simple language:
 - "Saturn reminds us to notice good things in our life."
 - "Gratitude means noticing and appreciating what we have."
2. Ask a few guided questions and allow think time:
 - "Who helps you?"
 - "What makes you smile?"
 - "What do you enjoy at school or home?"
3. Show a completed example of a Thankful Hand.
4. Explain that students can draw, write, point, or use AAC to show gratitude.



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Gameplay

Step 1: Create the Hand

Students either:

- Trace their own hand with support, or
- Use a pre-drawn large hand template

Support fine motor needs by holding paper steady, offering thicker pencils, or using templates.

Step 2: Add Thankful Ideas

1. Explain clearly:
 - "Each finger shows one thing you are thankful for."
2. Students add one idea per finger using:
 - Drawings
 - Symbols
 - Simple words
 - Stickers or pictures

Provide prompts if needed:

- "Someone who cares for you"
- "Something you like doing"
- "A place you feel safe"
- "Something that makes you happy"

Alternative option for each finger (5 senses):

- Something they like to smell
- Something they like to touch
- Something they like to feel
- Something they like to taste
- Something they like to see/watch

There is no requirement to fill every finger if this is overwhelming.

Step 3: Optional Sharing

Students may choose to:

- Share one finger with a partner
- Share one idea with the group
- Show their hand without speaking

Model respectful listening and responses such as:

- "Thank you for sharing."
- "That's something nice to be thankful for."



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Debrief / Reflection

Use one or two simple questions:

- "How did it feel to think about thankful things?"
- "Is there someone you might thank today?"

Reinforce:

"Gratitude helps us feel calm, connected, and happy."

Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown by participation, reflection, and engagement with gratitude in a way that suits each student.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support regulation, comfort, and engagement.

Adjustments may include:

- Using larger templates with more space
- Offering textured materials (felt, foam stickers)
- Allowing frequent breaks
- Working one finger at a time
- Reducing visual clutter on the table

Students may complete fewer fingers if needed.

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare AAC in Advance

- Pages with: people, happy, like, home, school, play, food

2. Model AAC Use

- Teacher models selecting a gratitude symbol and saying:
 - "I am thankful for..."

3. Student Participation Options

- Selecting symbols
- Eye gaze
- Partner-assisted pointing
- Single-message buttons

4. Sharing with AAC

- "I am thankful for ____."
- "This makes me happy."

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Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

- Provide pre-cut or pre-drawn hands as standard for Levels C–D.
- Accept drawings, symbols, gestures, or AAC equally.
- Allow students to keep their work private if preferred.
- Display hands at accessible heights if creating a class display.

Teacher Notes

“My Thankful Hand – Levels C & D” supports emotional awareness, fine motor engagement, and gratitude practice in a calm, structured way. It works well as a reflective activity, a follow-up to active play, or a transition into calm learning time. Linked to Saturn, it reinforces that gratitude grows when we notice the small things that support us every day.

