

SASO MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION LESSON

TOPIC: APPRECIATE GOODNESS

Dr. Carolyn Peluso Atkins, Professor
West Virginia University



Note to Teacher: This lesson reinforces one of the Six Pillars of Character: Responsibility. Specifically, it emphasizes pursuing excellence—i.e., do your best, be prepared, stay focused, work hard. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the SASO Vignette featuring Michaela Ashford.

Discussion questions, scenarios and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. They are interchangeable and certain activities are more appropriate for different age groups. The teacher will determine and select content for specific ages.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or to small groups. With regard to the latter, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussions Questions: Vocabulary and Concepts

1. Define appreciation.
2. Give examples of being appreciative.
3. What is “goodness”? Give examples.
4. How does it make you feel when some appreciates you or something you have done?
5. Is being appreciative important? Why or why not?
6. Is “being” appreciative the same as “showing appreciation”? Why or why not?
7. How do you show your family that you appreciate them?
8. How do you show your friends that you appreciate them?
9. How do you show others (e.g., teachers) that you appreciate them?
10. Is goodness contagious? Why or why not?

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. You are an athlete and just played very poorly in the game. What would you do?
2. One of your parents is very ill. What would you do?

3. It's one of those days where everything has gone wrong. You are very frustrated. What would you do to begin feeling better?
4. It's your mom's or dad's birthday and you have no money to buy a gift. What would you do?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a brief paper or give a speech about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. What is one of the best "gifts" you can give to your family?
2. What is one of the best "gifts" you can give to your friends?
3. Give an example of ...or write about a time...when you showed appreciation to someone.
4. Give an example of ...or write about a time... when someone showed appreciation to you. How did it make you feel?
5. Does showing appreciation change or improve relationships with others?
6. Give an example of ...or write about a time... when you did not show appreciation...and you should have.
7. Give an example of ...or write about a time... when someone did not show appreciation to you...and you should have.
8. Did someone teach you about appreciation? Who? How?
9. Are you as appreciative as you should be? Describe why or why not.
10. Define goodness. Where is it and where do we find it?
11. Define gratitude. Is it the same as appreciation?
12. Write a poem or song about appreciation or goodness.
13. Write a poem or song about appreciation or goodness.
14. Select one of the quotations (brainyquote.com) below and explain what it means.
 - a) "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."
~ John F. Kennedy
 - b) "Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."
~Voltaire
 - c) "The roots of all goodness lie in the soil of appreciation for goodness." ~Dalai Lama

- d) “Give yourself a gift of five minutes of contemplation in awe of everything you see around you. Go outside and turn your attention to the many miracles around you. This five-minute-a-day regimen of appreciation and gratitude will help you to focus your life in awe.” ~Wayne Dyer
- e) “By appreciation, we make excellence in others our own property.” ~Voltaire
- f) “The greatest humiliation in life is to work hard on something from which you expect great appreciation, and then fail to get it.” ~E. W. Howe
- g) “Hopeful thinking can get you out of your fear zone and into your appreciation zone.” ~Martha Beck
- h) “With age comes the understanding and appreciation of your most important asset, your health.” ~Oprah Winfrey
- i) “Gratitude is one of the strongest and most transformative states of being. It shifts your perspective from lack of abundance and allows you to focus on the good in your life, which in turn pulls ore goodness into your reality.” ~Jen Sincero
- j) “Love is not just tolerance. It’s not just distant appreciation. It’s a warm sense of, ‘I am enjoying the fact that you are you.’” ~. T. Wright
- k) “Human greatness does not lie in wealth and power, but in character and goodness. People are just people, and all people have faults and shortcomings, but all of us are born with a basic goodness.” ~Anne Frank
- l) “The roots of all goodness lie in the soil of appreciation for goodness.” ~Dalai Lama
- m) “There is no greatness where there is no simplicity, goodness, and truth.” ~Leo Tolstoy
- n) “The fragrance of flowers spreads only in the direction of the wind. But the goodness of a person spreads in all directions.” ~Chanakya
- o) “I always tell young girls, surround yourself with goodness. I learned early on how to get the hatears out of my life.” ~Michelle Obama
- p) “A good person can make another person good; it means that goodness will elicit goodness sin the society; other persons will also be good.” ~Bhumibol Adulyadej
- q) “Goodness is the only investment that never fails.” ~Henry David Thoreau
- r) “Try to see the good in others. When you’re tempted to judge someone, make an effort to see their goodness. Your willingness to look for the best in pepole will subconsciously bring it forth.” ~Marianne Williamson