

GIVING HEARTS DAY

Middle School Curriculum

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Instructions for Educators

Note: The activities included in this workbook can be used as separate short Giving Hearts Day activities, or used together to create a longer Giving Hearts Day unit. Please use the activities as you see fit to meet the needs of your students.

Considerations for Prior Knowledge:

Prior to beginning this project, it is recommended that students first learn what Giving Hearts Day is all about. Have students watch this video to learn more about Giving Hearts Day. The video is also available in an [EdPuzzle](#), which is an interactive online format that prompts students to answer questions about the content throughout the video to ensure students are engaged in learning.

It is also recommended to create a Giving Hearts Day word wall of important vocabulary terms to support students' learning.

Nonprofit - Research (Part 1)

Students learn what kinds of charities align with their interests in addition to researching a few specific charities that are a part of Giving Hearts Day.

Students will engage in the following activities:

- Complete an online quiz to learn what charities align with their interests
- Visit the Giving Hearts Day website to explore all the charities that are a part of Giving Hearts Day.
- Choose three charities to research
- Research information about the mission statements of different charities
- Choose one specific charity to love by writing it on a heart which can be cut out and used in a classroom display.

Argumentative Writing (Part 2)

Students will focus on one specific charity they love to create an argumentative essay about why the charity is important to the community.

Students will engage in the following activities:

- Draft an argumentative essay using a template
- Use universal arguments to strengthen writing
- Revise, edit, and create a final copy of their essay to publish

Infographic from Argumentative Writing (Part 3)

Students will create an infographic to complement their argumentative essay.

Students will engage in the following activities:

- Learn the purpose of an infographic
- Identify key words and phrases from the argumentative essay to include in the infographic
- Use Canva to create an infographic containing information and graphics that compliment the charity they love
- Display and/or present their infographic alongside their argumentative essay

Part 1: Find a Charity to Love

Take this [Online quiz](#) to find a charity to love that aligns with your values and interests.

Results: What type of charities are a good fit for you?

Charities are often called nonprofits. This is because they do work to help other people without the intent to make a profit. Therefore, the words charity and nonprofit are often interchangeable.

Visit the [Giving Hearts Day website](#) to search for some charities that you are passionate about supporting. On the Giving Hearts Day website, you can filter nonprofits into different organization types to match your values and interests. You can also search nonprofits found in your city to see what organizations help your community.

What are some charities found on the Giving Hearts Day site that align with your values and interests? Find three charities and record what you learn about them on the table below.

- People
- Animals
- The Environment
- The Arts & Culture
- Education
- Kids
- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- People with Disabilities
- Senior Services

Nonprofit	Why does this nonprofit interest you?	What is the mission statement for this nonprofit?

Create a Display: Choose a charity to love and write it in the heart found below. Cut out your heart to create a Giving Hearts Day display of charities that students love.



is a charity that I love!

Part 2: Advocate for a Charity

Now that you've found a charity to love, it's time to advocate for that specific nonprofit. Use the template below to draft an argumentative essay in support of a nonprofit of your choice. Use information found on the Giving Hearts Day website as well the nonprofit's website to include in your paragraph.

The example below includes a claim with one set of evidence and reasoning in support of The Boys and Girls Club of the Red River Valley.

Writing a Claim

A claim persuades, argues, convinces, proves, or strongly suggests something to a reader who may or may not initially agree with you. The claim should introduce the name of your nonprofit and its importance to the community. The claim should be followed by the mission statement of the nonprofit.

Example: *The Boys and Girls Club of the Red River Valley is important to families in the Fargo-Moorhead area. The mission of The Boys and Girls Club of the Red River Valley is to provide a safe, caring and fun environment for youth to learn, grow, and prepare for a great future.*

→ Claim
→ Mission Statement

Including Evidence

Evidence includes specific facts, data, or research that support the claim.

Example: *The Boys and Girls Club provides before school and after school youth development programs at 13 locations in the FM area.*

Reasoning

Strong reasoning connects the evidence back to the claim to explain why it is important. Universal arguments are used to connect the evidence to things that people value in order to compel them to agree. Reasons tied to strong universal arguments are more convincing.

Example: *This allows children a safe place to go after school so they won't be home alone unsupervised.*

Drafting Template

Once the template is complete, revise and edit your work before creating a final copy.

Claim + Mission Statement	
Evidence <i>(Data or Research)</i>	
Reasoning <i>(Connect to a Universal Argument)</i>	
Evidence <i>(Data or Research)</i>	
Reasoning <i>(Connect to a Universal Argument)</i>	
Evidence <i>(Data or Research)</i>	
Reasoning <i>(Connect to a Universal Argument)</i>	
Conclusion	

UNIVERSAL ARGUMENTS

Money

Time for...

Ecology
(going green)

Values

Safety

Discipline/order

Education

Health

Part 3: Create an Infographic

Now that you've created an argumentative essay to advocate for a charity you love, it's time to go visual. Infographics use striking, engaging visual representations of information, data, or knowledge. They are intended to present information quickly and clearly. Infographics use a minimal amount of text that gives the reader an easy-to-understand overview of a topic.

Use Canva (canva.com) to create an infographic to showcase the importance of a charity you love.

Step 1: Choose a Template

Canva has many different infographic templates that can be used to create a visual representation of the information from your argumentative writing. To begin the search, click on the templates option found across the top of the screen. Then, choose infographics under the heading of marketing. There are many different themes to choose from. In fact, "charity" is a theme that is available through Canva. Explore some different themes or create your own design from a blank infographic. Decide which theme you think will be a good fit for the charity you love and click on "Customize this template." From there, you will be able to edit and add different elements, text, and images to the template.

Step 2: Choose the Information

What are some keywords / short phrases from your argumentative writing that will be important to include on your infographic? Consider including some statistics related to your nonprofit. Record your ideas below.



An example of an infographic for Giving Hearts Day.

Step 3: Choose the Images

What kinds of images will you use on your infographic to complement the information you are including? Canva includes many free elements that can be added to your template. You can also upload your own images. Search some of the options on Canva and record your ideas below. It's a good idea to include the logo for the nonprofit you are supporting.

Step 4: Create the Infographic

Print your infographic to display or present at school or share it with others digitally.

Reflect on Helping Others

There is a Chinese saying that goes: "If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody." For centuries, the greatest thinkers have suggested the same thing: Happiness is found in helping others.

Below are some additional quotes about generosity. Read them and reflect on what they say about helping others.

TEACHER NOTE: This activity can be done in multiple formats, such as: have all students complete the handout, write a quote on the board each day to discuss, or use as a jigsaw activity where groups of students each take a quote and explain what it means to the rest of the class.

1. "For it is in giving that we receive." - *Saint Francis of Assisi*

What does this quote mean? _____

2. "The sole meaning of life is to serve humanity." - *Leo Tolstoy*

What does this quote mean? _____

3. "We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." - *Winston Churchill*

What does this quote mean? _____

4. "There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up." - *John Holmes*

What does this quote mean? _____

5. "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." - *Dr. Seuss*

What does this quote mean? _____

6. "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." - *Pablo Picasso*

What does this quote mean? _____

7. "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." - *Mahatma Gandhi*

What does this quote mean? _____

8. "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile." - *Albert Einstein*

What does this quote mean? _____

9. "Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others." - *Booker T. Washington*

What does this quote mean? _____

10. "The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to making things better." - *Robert F. Kennedy*

What does this quote mean? _____

How to Write a Thank You Note

Read the article called below, by Jacqueline Barba found on newsela.com. Think back on a time when you were very appreciative of something someone did for you. After reading the information from the article, write a thank you note to that person on page 5. Then, deliver the thank you note, either in person or via mail/email, to let them know they made a difference in your life.

Think of a time when you felt thankful. Maybe a classmate invited you to their lunch table when you weren't sure where to sit. Maybe a teacher noticed you were having a hard time with a problem and came over to help. Maybe a friend gave you a hug when you needed cheering up.

In moments like those, you are likely to experience gratitude – the feeling of being grateful for something or someone. Gratitude is a positive feeling. It can feel like warmth and calm in your body. It can make you feel safe and loved. Some of us even get a little teary-eyed when we are grateful!

When you have this positive feeling because of someone else's actions, writing a thank you note is one way to show and share your gratitude. The person you are writing will be happy to know that their actions made a difference. Receiving the thank you note is sure to brighten their day.

You can send a thank you note over email, in a text or even as a video, but don't overlook the traditional handwritten letter or card. Sending a physical note of thanks gives the recipient something to keep and look back on later.

No matter how you choose to send your thank you note, there's an added bonus to expressing gratitude: It will make you feel good all over again! Studies show that when we express gratitude, it improves our mood and our outlook. In other words, it boosts our happiness and makes us more optimistic. So everybody wins – both the person who receives the thank you note, and the person who writes it.

Here are a few tips for writing a thoughtful thank you note.

REFLECT

If you've set out to write a thank you note, you probably already know who you'll be writing to, and what you are thanking them for. Still, before you put pen to paper, take a moment to think about why you are thankful. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself: How did the person's action, kindness or gift make you feel? What makes their behavior so special to you? How did it impact the days or weeks that followed? As you reflect, jot down some notes. You can look back at these notes when you are ready to write your letter.

WRITE A ROUGH DRAFT

If you decide to send a handwritten note or card, write a rough draft on a piece of scrap paper. This way, your thank you note won't have any scribbles or cross-outs on it. In fact, it's a good idea to write a rough draft even if you're typing your thank you note in an email or text. A draft helps you get your thoughts and feelings down on paper before polishing and perfecting them.

USE A GREETING

The greeting, or salutation, of a letter goes at the very top. It addresses the person who is being written to. "Dear [Name]" is a popular greeting. You may want to use this if you're writing to a teacher, a caregiver or another grown-up. If you're writing a note to a friend or classmate, you can also use a more casual greeting like "Hello [Name]," "Hi [Name]" or even "Greetings!"

OPEN WITH A THANKFUL STATEMENT

In a thank you note, as in many kinds of writing, it's a good idea to get right to your point! Begin your letter with a sentence that states that you are thankful and what you are thankful for. Here are a few ideas for how to begin this first sentence:

"Thank you so much for..."

"I am grateful for..."

"I am thankful for..."

"I want to express my gratitude for..."

BE SPECIFIC

After you've explained what you are grateful for, use details and specific examples to explain why you feel this way. Now is a good time to return to the notes you took when you were reflecting on your gratitude. What specific action did the person you are thanking take? How did it affect you? Did it brighten your mood? Help you out of a tough spot? The details here will depend on your unique experience, but the most important part is sharing how the person's behavior or thoughtfulness made you feel. It's okay to be brief! A short note can still be specific and heartfelt.

SAY THANK YOU AGAIN

Close your letter with one final expression of thanks to the reader. You might say, "Thank you, again, for your kindness," "I am very grateful to you" or any other expression of thanks that feels most true.

USE A COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE

Sign off with a complimentary close, the word or phrase that appears right before your signature at the bottom of a letter. Popular closings include "Sincerely," "Warm Wishes" and "With Gratitude." Sign your name below.

REREAD AND SEND YOUR NOTE

Read your note one final time to make sure you're happy with it and that there are no errors or typos. When you're done, it's time to send it off. If you have written a note or card by hand, you can put it in an envelope and drop it in the mail. (Remember to put postage on the envelope first.) If you've written a thank you text or email, you can send it with a click. Once your note is on its way to the reader, all that's left to do is to enjoy the good feelings that follow when you practice gratitude.

#Gratefulness

Create a list of 10 things that you are thankful for in your everyday life. The use of social media is a great way to inspire gratefulness in the hearts of others. List the 10 things you are most grateful for on the X template below. Cut out your twitter feed to create a classroom display of gratitude.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

What are you Thankful for?

Directions: Create a list of 10 things that you are thankful for in your everyday life. Add illustrations if time allows. When finished, each person will share their most unusual gratitude with the class.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Giving Hearts Day Word Wall Vocabulary

Print these terms and definitions to create a Giving Hearts Day word wall for your classroom.



Philanthropy
n.



**The desire to promote
the welfare of others,
especially through
generous donations
of time, talent,
or money.**



Nonprofit
n.



**An organization that
benefits some public good
rather than raising money
to make a profit for
the organization's
owners.**



Charity
n.



**An organization
set up to provide help
and raise money for
those in need.**



Advocate
v.



**To publicly
recommend
or support.**



**Mission
Statement**
n.



**A short statement
of why an organization
exists, what its overall
goal is, or what
purpose it serves.**



Community
n.



A social group whose members have something in common, such as a shared government, geographical location, or culture.



Impact
n.



**To leave an impression
or make a difference
to someone.**



Volunteer
n.



A person who does something, especially helping others, willingly and without be forced or paid to do it.



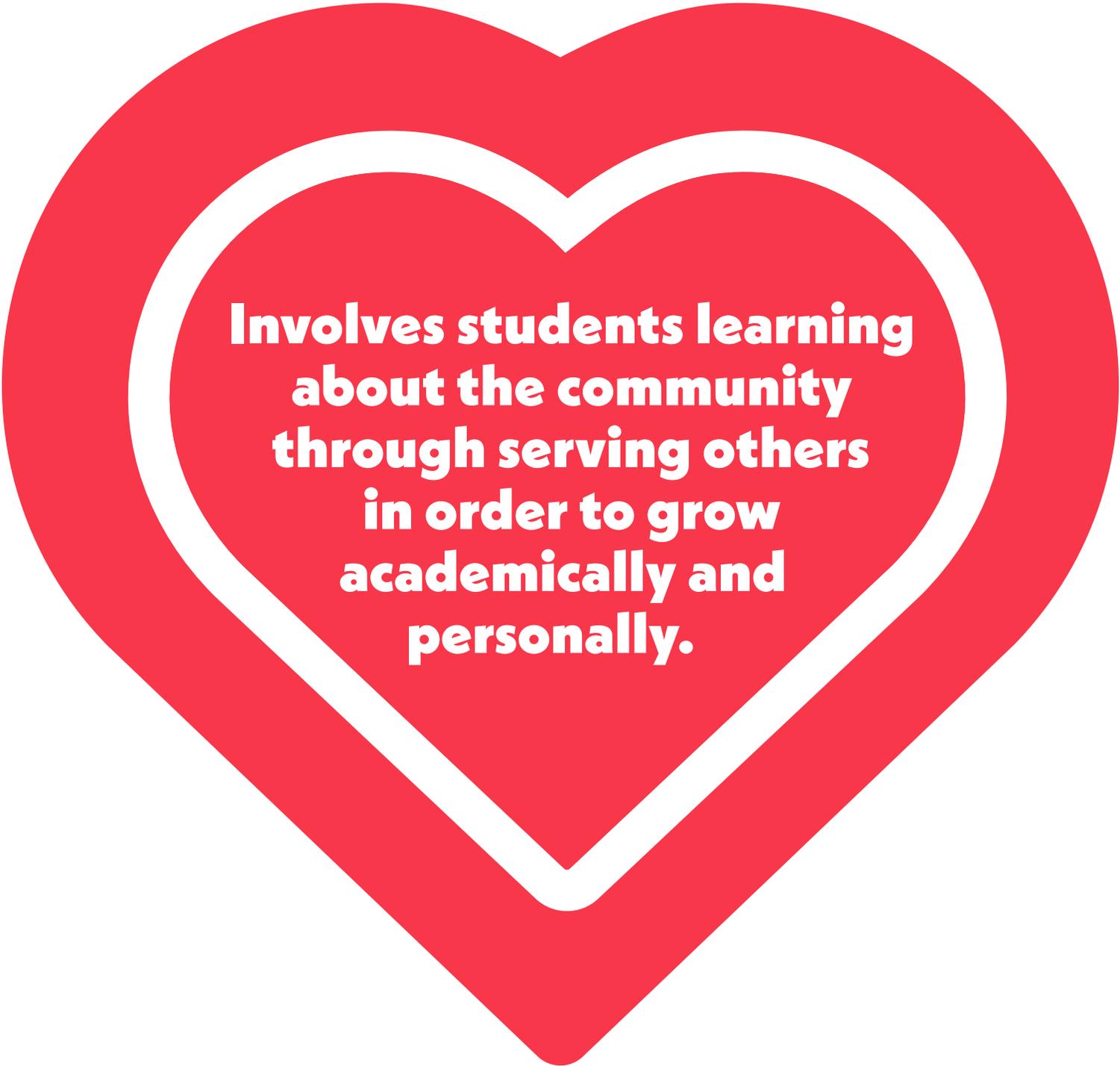
Gratitude
n.



**Focusing on what is good
in our lives and being
thankful for the things we
have; Pausing to notice
and appreciate things
we often take
for granted.**



**Service
Learning**
n.



**Involves students learning
about the community
through serving others
in order to grow
academically and
personally.**

Read Alouds

Not only are the books listed below a great fit for Giving Hearts Day concepts, such as thankfulness and generosity, they can also be used to reinforce story elements, such as plot line, characterization, and theme of literature.

Boxes for Katje, by Candance Fleming and Stacy Dressen-McQueen (Fiction)

Katje's family lives in Olst, Holland and the entire town must scrape by with very little after World War II. Clothing is frequently mended, and soap is considered a luxury item most go without. As spring arrives, so does a mysterious package. Katje discovers a trove of delights inside including chocolates, soap, and fresh socks. Rosie, an American midwestern girl, has sent the package in an effort to help people affected by the war. Katje sends a thank you letter to Rosie and soon, two communities are connected despite the distance separating them. An excellent lesson in generosity and the impact one single act of kindness can have on others.

The Gift of Nothing, by Patrick McDonnell (Fiction)

When we teach our children about giving, we are often referring to material things. But what about the gift of friendship? In this lovable book, the stars of the Mutts comic strip star in a simple, but important story. Mooch the cat wants to get Earl the dog the perfect present. But what do you get for a friend that has everything? Earl already owns a bowl, a bed, and a toy. What more could he need? Mooch decides nothing is what he needs and shows readers that giving your time and love to someone is often the greatest gift of all.

Under the Lemon Moon, by Edit Hope Fine and Rene King Moreno (Fiction)

Rosalinda has a beloved lemon tree in her backyard, but one night she discovers a man leaving the garden with a sack full of lemons from the tree. Within a week, the tree becomes sick and Rosalinda scours the Mexican countryside in search of help. A wise old woman gives her advice, which Rosalinda follows, and soon lemons appear. With a bounty of lemons, Rosalinda disperses her crop, giving the last one to the man who stole from her. What she tells him will plant seeds of generosity in your own heart.

What is Given from the Heart, by Patricia C. McKissack (Fiction)

This final book by the late McKissack is a sweet and poignant story about a poor boy who doesn't realize how much he has to give. James Otis and his mama have fallen on hard times, but that doesn't stop Mama from turning her cherished tablecloth into an apron for a family that has lost everything in a fire. What does James Otis have that's worth giving? It just needs to come from the heart.

The Invisible Boy, by Trudy Ludwig (Fiction)

It's all too easy for kids to overlook a shy classmate, like the book's main character Justin. There's a sweet but not cloying message at hand when Brian extends a hand of friendship and helps Justin shine during a class project.