# Gratitude Journal

CharacterLAB

**PAGE 1:** Overview

**PAGE 2:** Journal Prompts

**PAGE 3:** Example

### How long does it take?
10 minutes per entry

### How do I do it?
Keep a journal where you write in detail about things you are grateful for in your life.

### How does it work?
By default, our attention is drawn to problems and obstacles in life. This exercise helps you notice, in ways both big and small, what is going well.

**Inspired by:** Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(2), 377–389.

*"We are all more blind to what we have than to what we have not."*

-Audre Lorde

NAME: _____

# Gratitude Journal

**Character LAB**

Respond to one of the prompts below in a response of at least 5 - 6 sentences. Try to respond to a new prompt every day or every other day.  Save this page and use it as a reference for new prompts.

Push yourself to elaborate and think deeply about why you are grateful for what you write about in each entry. Try to include all of the following in each response:

- A direct answer to the prompt

- Details about your response. Go for depth (writing more about one thing by including thoughts and feelings) instead of breadth (writing a little about lots of things)

- An explanation of why this person/experience/ object makes you grateful. Push to go deep on "why?"

---

**A.** Think of a person in your life who you are grateful for. Why are you grateful for them?

**B.** Describe an event or experience that you didn't like when it was happening…but are grateful for now.

**C.** Write about a time when you worried something bad or upsetting would happen—but it didn't. What happened instead? How does that make you feel now?

**D.** We often take things for granted. What's something you might take for granted? How does it contribute to your life?

**E.** Think of someone who has helped you. They've also received help in their life. Who might have helped that person in their life and how?

**F.** Think of an activity you enjoy doing (e.g., a sport). How did you come to appreciate it?

**G.** What's something good that surprised you lately? What was surprising about it?

# Gratitude Journal

**CharacterLAB**

**EXAMPLE**

*People you're grateful for*

9/12    Sometimes I take it for granted that I have really nice friends. My friends help me out and make me feel better every day by saying nice things. When I first switched schools last year, I was sometimes really lonely. And then I met my friends and it was so much better. But now that we've been friends so long and text all the time, it's easy to forget how boring it was to not have anyone to talk to! I am really glad I have nice friends at my school now who make me laugh all the time.

*Someone who helped you*

9/13    My soccer coach, Coach Behar, is really great and helps everyone on our team get better. He's always really positive and never gets angry, even when someone messes up in a game. I bet that when he was growing up he had a really good coach also who showed him how to get better at soccer and was also really nice like him. Coach Behar always says that it's important to be proud of how you played, more than whether you won the game. He might have had a coach who said the same thing which is why he believes it so much.

*Help this person got earlier in their life*

9/14    When I first realized that Ms. Marconi graded our work on our math problems in Algebra I, not just the answers, I was really annoyed. I didn't see why I was losing points on problems I got right! It didn't seem fair at all. But when the problems got harder later in the year, I realized sometimes I would mess up a problem I understood by not keeping my work near and orderly. I needed to be more careful with each step, especially on things like systems of equations. Now I am glad that Ms. Marconi made me start paying attention to how I got to an answer, not just the answer.

*Experience you didn't like at first but now appreciate*