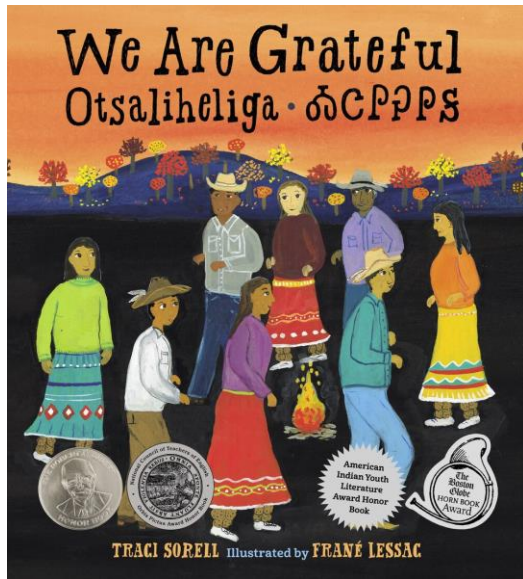


## We Are Grateful by Traci Sorell and illustrated by Frané Lessac



### Classroom Lesson Project: What Are You Grateful For?

By Leanna Rutka

#### Project Summary

Around our November concert, my 5th grade orchestra classes would have a quick ice-breaker/warm up conversation of what it means to be grateful. After having the conversation, we would read “We Are Grateful” and have students share examples that relate to the experiences in the book. Are they similar? Different? Then students will discuss what/who they’re grateful for in general **and** in their new journey in music. We will share our answers in a project where students can produce artwork, write about their gratitude, verbally explain, compose or play music, or other opportunities to share with friends and family to enjoy at our concert or outside of class.

I am looking for juicy word choices, words that relate to gratitude, spelling, and fluently reading and sharing student work with their target audience (family, friends, school community, etc.).

#### Lesson Goal(s) and Objective(s) - Connection to literacy strategies and skills

- Students will define what it means to be grateful
- Students will share their own examples of being grateful

- Students will build empathy and identity in peer discussions when sharing their examples
- Students will create a way to display what they're grateful for at our concert
- Students will explore the connections with people and experiences via the illustrations in the book (this will require prompts)

CCSS ELA-Literacy RL 5.2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

CCSS ELA-Literacy RL 5.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS ELA-Literacy RL 5.6: Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

CCSS ELA-Literacy RL 5.7: Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).

## **Audience**

5th graders for the project, family members, friends, school community, etc. for the completed project outcome

## **Materials Needed**

Book, craft (construction paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, etc.)/technology (music or composition apps, slide deck programs, etc.) materials, instrument and/or music for student work creations

## **Description of the Teaching and Learning Process**

Session Length: This project can take one to two in class sessions, OR if a student would prefer to explore via technology, they would be allowed to work on their project for one week, then turn it in. The final project would be due one week after the initial lesson.

Teacher Process: I want to start our class by asking the students what they know about gratitude and/or what it means to be grateful. For this icebreaker activity, we're in a class discussion set up for 5-10 minutes. I will encourage them to think about what and who they might be grateful for. I want them to be creative and meaningful in their responses. I want the first few answers to inspire their peers to think deeply and share! I will then read the book, "We Are Grateful", stopping on certain pages to ask specific questions to continue our class discussion with stories from students who might have stirring thoughts about the words and pictures in the books. What might they relate to? What might jog their memories

about their own experiences? What might have the opposite effect?

**Cover page:** “Cherokee people say otsaliheliga to express gratitude.” - Q: What do you say to express gratitude?

**Pg. 5-6:** “Remembering ancestors who suffered hardships...” - Q: We all suffer tough times, including some of our family members. Is there a way that you remember your loved ones or show them gratitude?

**Pg. 9-10:** “Share stories and food... feeding animals... and making toys” - Q: In many cultures, people spend time enjoying making, eating, and sharing food. Do you or your family have traditions where you give thanks around food?

**Pg. 17-18:** “Serving our country...” - Q: Do you know anyone in your family or friends who have served our country in the military? How do you show gratitude for others who sacrifice for our country?

**Pg. 19-22:** Celebrating summer - Q: What is your favorite part about summer break? Do you get opportunities to give thanks or reflect on what you’re grateful for?

Upon completion of the story, I’ll introduce and explain the project assignment. I will ask students to complete a project of their choosing, to share what or who they’re grateful for. I want to challenge them to produce an answer that expresses their gratitude about their life in general AND their time in music. They will be able to explore whatever medium allows them to be creative and express their gratitude.

Student Process: The students will think deeply about something or someone they may be grateful for. What experiences in their life have they been thankful for? What happened that might have changed their perspective on something? Students will engage in rich and robust discussion with each other, sharing experiences and encouraging peers to express their gratitude. Students will then listen and comment throughout the reading of the book, ensuring engagement and inspiration. Upon finishing the story, students will create a final product of their choosing, expressing their gratitude, to be shared with the class, their family, friends, or people within the school community.

Students will define grateful

Students will engage in peer discussions

Students will share examples and experiences of gratitude

Students will create a way to display what/who they’re grateful for at our concert

Scaffolding: Beginning with a discussion on what gratitude means and how it might apply to their individual lives. We would need to talk about the Cherokee component of the meaning and significance of gratitude, what words look like in Cherokee, and how we might pronounce them. Might we be grateful for this learning experience to explore a language that is native to America? Prompt the students to engage with the illustrations and PEOPLE in the book

Artifacts: Student creations that display what/who they're grateful for.