

# Expressing Gratitude through Collaborative Collaging

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**SUMMARY:** In this session we will explore children's books about gratitude and wonder and ultimately create an installation of collective gratitude.

**GOALS:**

- Participants will explore strategies for using children's books as meaningful conversation starters
- Participants will learn collage techniques inclusive to those who don't identify as "artistic"
- Participants will consider the value of collaborative vs. individual art making.

**AUDIENCE:** Can be adapted for any/all ages

**TIMING:** 75 minutes

**MATERIALS:**

- Small baskets or plates for participants to gather materials
- Assorted collage papers (origami papers, cut pieces of old maps and/or printed materials, paper doilies, painted papers, tissue papers, etc.) cut into small pieces (3" x 3" or smaller recommended)
- Chunky glue sticks (0.74 ounce or larger)
- Scissors
- Hexagon shaped background paper (heavyweight, such as student watercolor paper)
- Somewhere to hang completed collages and push pins to hang
- At least one picture book about gratitude: suggestions include [Todah](#) by Kyra Teis; [All the World](#) by Liz Scanlon; [Good Night, Laila Tov](#) by Laurel Snyder

**SET-UP:** Tables with space for participants to arrange and glue materials, and a separate table for display of materials (see example). Non-windy area.



## SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – *Introductions*
- 00:05-00:15 – *Read aloud of one or more picture books*
- 00:15-00:25 – *Group Dialogue*
- 00:25-00:45 – *Collaging Time*
- 00:45-1:00 – *Debrief/Sharing our work*
- 1:00-1:15 – *Bring it back to camp*

## SESSION OUTLINE

### 00:00-00:05 - Introductions

The session leader introduces session topic and leads group in a round of introductions w/ icebreaker prompt of their choice.

### 00:05-00:15 – Read aloud of one or more picture books

The session leader reads/invites participants to read aloud one or more picture books about gratitude.

### 00:15-00:25 – Group dialogue

Session leader facilitates a group dialogue about the book/books and the topic of gratitude:

- Thoughts about the book(s)? What feelings did it inspire in you? What did it make you think about?
- How did it feel to be listening to a picture book even though you are not a little kid? How do you think your experience hearing it was similar or different from a child's?
- Picture books can be one great way to explore all kinds of topics, even ones that are complex. All of these books touch on the concept of gratitude, or *hakarat hatov*, in Hebrew. Any thoughts about where that concept shows up in Jewish tradition? Where does it show up in *your* life?

### 00:25-00:45 – Collaging Time

Take time to think about some of the many things you feel grateful for. It might be something that was mentioned in one of the stories, or something completely different. It might be something you can see, or it might be a feeling or a sensory experience. (Consider taking time for some journalling or a conversation about this.)

Using this hexagon as your background, choose the collage materials that speak to you to represent something, or things, you are grateful for. There is no right or wrong way to do this!

When you feel ready, go up to the materials table, and choose some materials that feel inviting. (Don't offer glue sticks yet!) Take time to arrange, rearrange and explore before you start to attach anything.

When you feel ready to glue, come up and get a glue stick.

### 00:45-1:00 – Debrief/sharing our work

Extensions:

- Create a "museum placard" about your creation (Write a title, the name of the artist, materials used and write a sentence or two about what you made). You can offer a pre-made template for these cards.

- Match up participants to discuss their creations. Try the Project Zero routine: See, Think, Wonder (Each camper looks at the other's work and says... "I see..., I think..., I wonder" as a conversation prompt.)
- Make another!

To share, collages should be posted to create one collaborative collage, either on a wall, a window or butcher paper. Take time to invite campers to respond to the collaborative collage with the same See, Think, Wonder prompt. Should we give our collage a title? What should we call it?



Note: Depending where you display this, the project can be interactive, with a place for comments or with a table of materials for campers and staff who want to create their own collages to add on.

**1:00-1:15 – Bringing it to camp**

This will be an opportunity to talk about the opportunities and challenges we identify at trying this activity in our own unique settings, and to support one another in these conversations.