



“Thank You” Trees



Overview:

Families will work together to create a “tree” that represents things for which they are grateful. This can be used as an entry into shabbat (What am I grateful for from the past week?) or a reflection on family camp (What am I grateful for from the JFAM weekend?). This activity can help families develop a gratitude practice to continue when they return home.

Supplies:

Container:

- Sturdy wide mouth container such as a mason jar, a can (with no sharp edges), a vase, or Talenti ice cream container.
- Stones gathered from nature or glass gems [like these](#) to keep the base from tipping over
- Optional: Washi tape to decorate the container

Tree:

- Long sticks gathered from the outdoors (this can be done by families)
- Card stock, construction paper, or colorful index card

- Scissors and hole punch (or prepare the leaves in advance)
- String or yarn cut into in 6” lengths
- Thin markers
- Optional: [gratitude prompts](#)

Directions:

Setup:

- This is a versatile activity that can be set up as a stand-alone art session or, if you prepare all the materials in advance, can be set up in your dining hall or rec room with printed instructions. This option allows families to work on the activity independently during meals or breaks.

Instructions:

- Conversation prompts: What does it mean to be grateful? Show how your face looks when you are feeling grateful? What are some things that make you feel that way? (Consider sharing [these](#) or other gratitude prompts.)
- We are going to make something that helps remind us of all the things we are grateful for – a thank you tree! We will write or draw one thing we are grateful for on each leaf of the tree.
- Depending on the materials/options you are offering, instruct families about where to gather sticks, how to decorate the base, how to make leaves.

Extension/Follow Up

- Give families additional blank leaves to take home to continue this practice.
- Send families a follow up email with information about the [Jewish value of gratitude](#).

Additional Jewish content

- A printable version of the [Shehechyanu blessing](#) in Hebrew, English, and transliteration from PJ Library
- BimBam Videos “[What’s Jewish about Gratitude?](#)” for adults, or “[Everything is Amazing!](#)” for kids.

Gratitude Prompts:

What am I thankful for?

1. Today was special because...
2. I’m looking forward to...

3. I'm proud that I can...
4. I love where I live because...
5. My family member _____ is important to me because...
6. My friend _____ is important to me because...
7. Today I felt happy when...
8. One of my favorite inside places is...
9. One of my favorite outside places is...
10. One of my favorite things to look at/watch is...
11. One of my favorite smells is...
12. One of my favorite things to taste is...
13. One of my favorite things to touch/hold is...
14. One of my favorite sounds is...