



Express Publishing



POSITIVE 4U
EDUCATING POSITIVE PEOPLE

Teaching Happiness

in the Language Classroom
by Despina Mallidou

Teaching Happiness

in the Language Classroom

by Despina Mallidou

Contents

Teaching Gratitude	6
My Grateful Window!	8
My Gratitude Cape!	10
Teaching Kindness	12
My Love Glasses!	14
My Love Dice!	16
Teaching Resilience	18
My 'Help myself'-Toolbox!	20
Teaching Empathy	22
Empathy Drama Game!	24
Teaching Character Strength	26
My Strength Badge!	28
Teaching Setting Goals	30
Setting Goals - My purpose of life	32
Teaching Collaboration - Engage Meaningfully	34
My Friendship Pizza!	36
Emotions	38
Guessing the Emotion!	40
My Emotion Volcano!	42
Teaching Self Empathy	44
My Self Love Mirror	46
Teaching Mind Growth	48
Things I can/can't control!	50





'Happiness should be the end goal of education'

Aristotle



**So how do we succeed in using positive interventions
in our language classroom?**

According to Seligman et al.'s 2009 paper, positive education is a response to the gap between what people want for their children and what schools teach. That is, most parents want their children to be happy, healthy and confident, but schools often focus mainly on achievement, discipline and academic skills. These are of course important, but so are positive outcomes.

Sometimes we teachers get caught in a negative cycle and this can reflect on our teaching, which automatically results in blocking learning efficiency.

The wellbeing of our students can be implemented in teaching through positive psychological interventions.

It's not academic achievement that leads to happiness, but happiness that leads to academic achievement. Students who feel supported are likely to be more focused in class. A positive and supportive learning environment can help students thrive, not only academically but also mentally and socially.

With 30 years of teaching experience, I have come to realize how subconsciously thirsty for a rich educational experience kids are. This realization motivated me to look for ways to provide them with it, help them create positive memories and prepare them for the demands and complexities their future working and social lives will bring.

I have always considered language as a vehicle for teaching students so many more things than grammar and vocabulary. While introducing and practicing the language, life skills and values can also be taught and learned through a holistic methodological approach.

In the classroom, we must help students engage meaningfully with their classmates through acts of kindness. They should feel praised for their work and encouraged to

do even better, practice gratitude, find their strengths and expand their minds while developing their empathy.

I'm going to show you how!

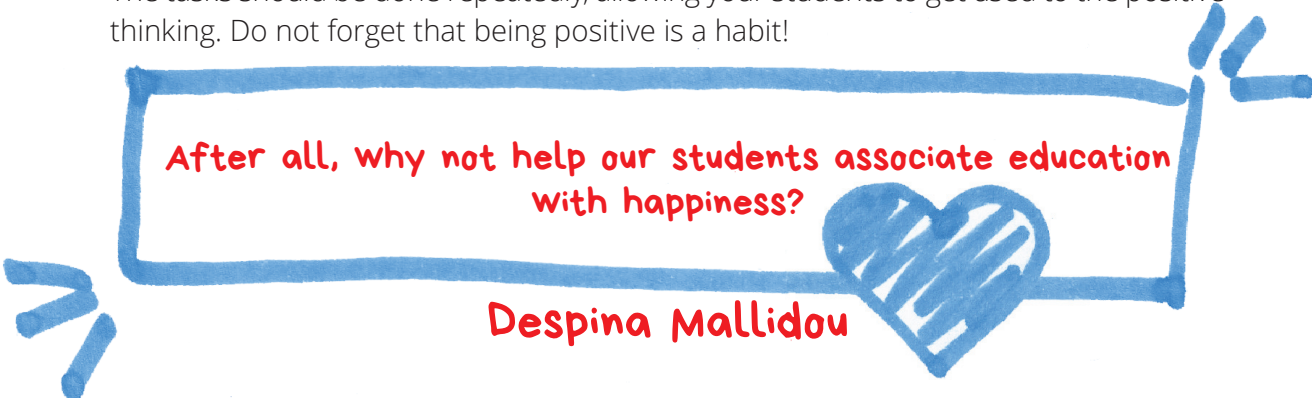
One can find quite a big number of studies about positive intervention at schools around the world. The aim of this book is to equip language teachers with specific tasks, the implementation of which will expose students to a rich educational experience. Students are encouraged to think more deeply with their minds and cultivate positive habits that will make them happier and more resilient people.

The need for such material to be included in our teaching is even more in demand nowadays, due to the isolated learning environment many children experienced during the COVID pandemic.

This book can be used as a reference since the tasks in this book can supplement any other educational material being used.

Most of the tasks can be adapted to meet the linguistic needs of any level. It is up to you to decide when to use it and how often, according to your syllabus design.

The tasks should be done repeatedly, allowing your students to get used to the positive thinking. Do not forget that being positive is a habit!



**After all, why not help our students associate education
with happiness?**

Despina Mallidou

*Special thanks to Express Publishing for always embracing new ideas and innovative tools
which can facilitate the work of language teachers all over the world!*



Teaching Gratitude

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. It is connected with feeling more positive emotions and building stronger relationships.

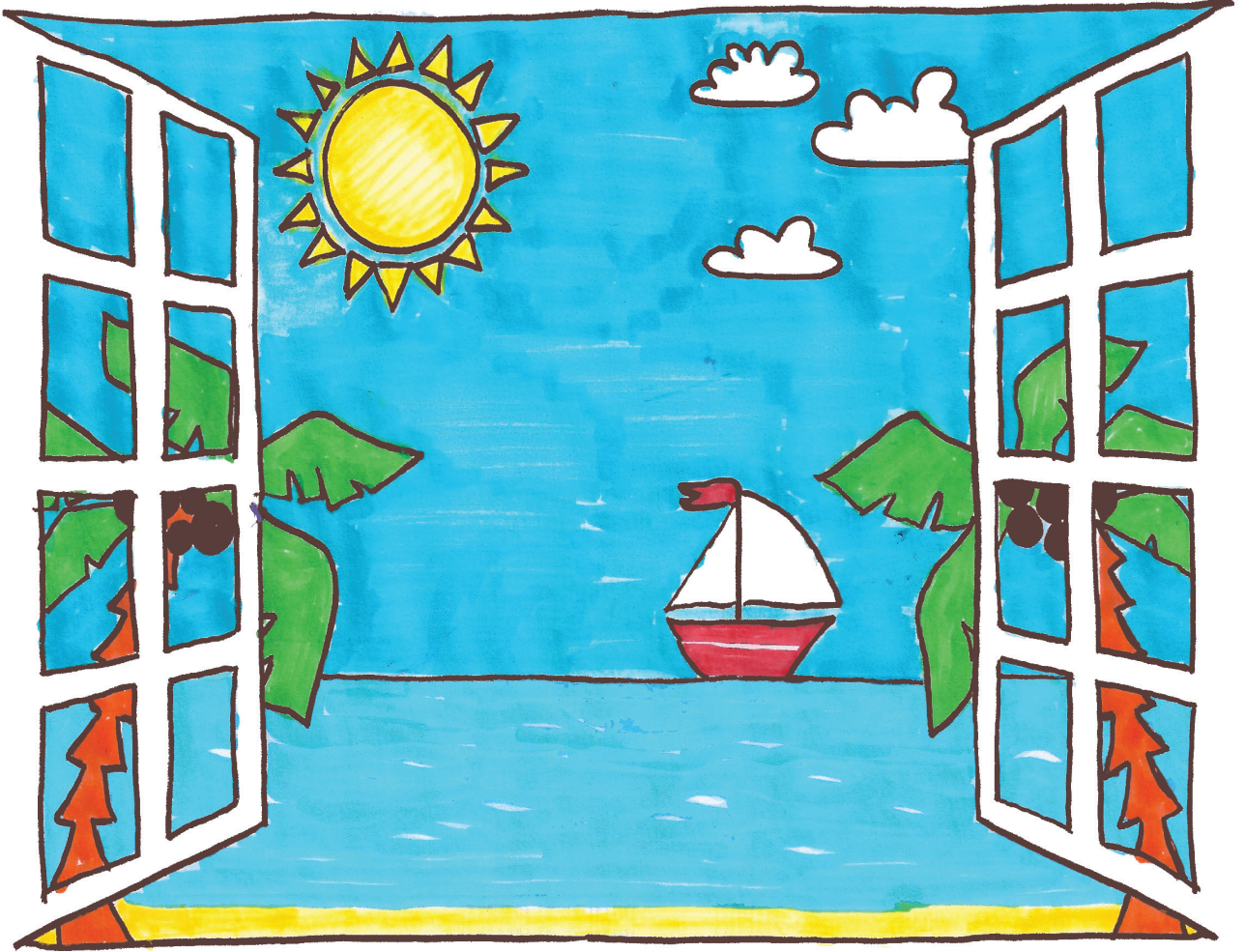
For students especially, it boosts their ability to learn and make good decisions. People who often feel grateful and appreciative are happier, less stressed and less depressed.

In addition, grateful thinking - and especially the expression of it to others - is associated with increased levels of energy, optimism, and empathy. It also increases students' ability to focus during class, and their ability to remain resilient at moments when feeling that learning is challenging.

Most of the times we take things for granted, we think we deserve them and that we will never be without them.

One of the most important things we can teach our students is to be grateful for what they have.





My Thankful Window!

Aim :

To make students appreciate the area they are living in, their neighborhood, their window view. We want them to realize how many things there are around us that we should feel grateful for and not take for granted.

While in the classroom, encourage students to approach the classroom window and ask them to have a very careful look at the view. Then, one by one, each student should say 'thank you' for something they see which is important for them. For example, a tree (gives oxygen), house (provides us with shelter), a flower (feeds the bees), a car (helps us travel).

They can practice 'I can see ... there is ... there are ...!'

One time, when doing the activity at school, a student said that he felt grateful for the boiler he saw on the roof of the building, because it provides us with hot water. Since then, never have I ever had a shower without feeling grateful for the hot water I have. By saying that, I want to emphasize the importance of expressing gratitude for the whole team.

Additionally, they can work in pairs or in groups and draw their own huge, thankful window, picturing a collaborative visual scene they are thankful for. They describe it out loud to the class using the present continuous e.g., the sun is shining, children are playing football. For this activity, you can use a long piece of paper from a paper roll, placed either on a table or on the floor. Find a place on a wall somewhere in your school to put the thankful window artwork. Make sure that it is a popular spot where it can be viewed by students every time they enter their classroom!



My Gratitude Cape!

Aim : To make children realize that nothing should be taken for granted and therefore we should feel grateful for everything we have!

Acknowledging every single thing we are grateful for is certainly a start, but it makes a great difference when we put it down on a piece of paper. It all comes to life, and it becomes tangible for the young children, too!

Let's picture the gratitude we feel by creating our own personalized gratitude cape!

Give students photocopies of the cape (see appendix) and encourage them to do their own individual gratitude cape craft. They can decorate it using whatever material they like (colour markers, stickers, glitter, pictures.).

At the end we can staple ribbons and attach them around the neck as if they are 'wearing' them. We can also ask them to present the capes in class describing them and justifying why they are grateful for the items on their cape, why they are important for them e.g., I am grateful for my family because...

After finishing, encourage students to wear them and elicit whether they already feel more grateful.

Family Task

The kids take the cape home. Having informed parents about the task of the gratitude cape, encourage them to talk about it with their children.

The role of the cape is to also offer comfort when experiencing difficult times. Not all days are easy. The cape reminds us of all our good things and helps soothe our problems.

Gratitude letter

Students are asked to write a letter to their parents, a friend, a teacher; whoever they want.

The reason for writing the letter is to say thank you and to state in as detailed a way as possible why they are thankful for that person. When we analyse and write down who we are grateful for and why, we give the task a bigger meaning than with just a simple 'thank you'. The younger students can make a drawing instead.



POSITIVE 4U
EDUCATING POSITIVE PEOPLE



Express Publishing

ISBN 978-1-3992-0933-5



9 781399 209335