

## Gratitude Tree

**Objective:** Students will design and paint a seasonal tree depicting autumn colors with sayings of gratitude.

**Topics & Keywords for Discussion:** thankful, giving, grateful, printing, nature prints.

**Materials:** small leaves, watercolor paint (or water based markers), watercolor paper, paintbrushes and water.

**Opening activity:** Have students close their eyes and bring to mind all of the things they are grateful for: invite them to imagine the people, experiences and things in their lives that bring them joy, one at a time, hold one image in their mind for a few moments and then they can bring another to mind. You'll be guiding them through this imagination experience. After a minute or so, ask students to open their eyes, and have them share some of the things or people in their lives that they appreciate and feel gratitude. Give students pencils and paper to create a list of a 25+ things they are thankful for... and share this video with them to inspire their thinking: <https://youtu.be/yA5Qpt1JRE4>

**Core Activity:** Distribute supplies and have students start by sketching out their tree with pencil. All around the tree, have students write in pen the many things they have to be grateful for- things from their lists and additional items they discover while creating the art. Then, they can start adding color with watercolor paint and or MARKERS & water.

**Reflection:** Appreciation and gratitude are powerful motivators for focusing attention and cultivating positive attitudes both for making art and working cooperatively. As students clean up and reset the space, ask them to share if thinking about the items or people they appreciate gives them a good feeling, and why or why not?

