

Gratitude Trophies

This is an opportunity to foster belonging in any group, while also practicing metaphorical thinking and sculpting. Students sculpt a paper 'trophy' for a peer. Working with constrained materials means that students are invited to experiment with and discover a variety of ways to manipulate the material. Assuming conditions for creative engagement are set, everyone comes away feeling appreciated for a quality that they bring to the group.

Time: 20-55 minutes

Materials: brown bags, newspaper, or other medium-weight paper, scissors, staplers and/or masking tape. Optional: yarn/string, mid-weight cardboard. Keep it simple!

1. Prepare students to think about the following either through examples or prompts: How many textures can be created? How can the paper be manipulated? What shapes can it take? How can pieces be interconnected?
2. Prime metaphorical thinking with an example such as: "If you want to celebrate someone for being helpful, how might you show that in your trophy? What could you do to represent 'helpful'?" If students need examples, offer ideas such as: a hand reaching out; a band-aid; a power cord; etc.
3. Assign students someone to appreciate by drawing names from a hat or with some other randomizing approach.
4. Review materials and expectations for safe use of tools, clean-up, etc.
5. Prompt: **Make a trophy that celebrates a quality this person brings to the group.**
6. After the allotted period of time for making (10-30 minutes), pause and clean up.
7. **Award Ceremony** - Either in small groups or as a class, devote enough time for each student to receive their trophy along with an explanation of what it means to the maker. Model how you want this demonstration of appreciation to go. Example: *I made this power cord for you, _____ because you are always helpful when others are trying to understand new concepts. Your willingness to support your classmates is a connection that feels electric, like being plugged into a source of power that anyone can share.*
8. Optional: assign a student to snap photos of students with their trophies.
9. Students can either take their trophies home, display them, or intentionally deconstruct them so the paper can be recycled.

Tips

- It helps to have practiced metaphorical thinking. Our video: [Metaphorical Thinking](#)
- The **Virtues List** may be a helpful visual resource as students are considering qualities and creating metaphors.

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Reflection Questions

How did it feel to give?

How did it feel to receive?

What discoveries (about the person) came from making a trophy for someone?

What discoveries came from receiving your trophy?

WHICH CREATIVE RESOURCES ARE WE GROWING? Collaborative, Visual, Experimental, Metaphorical, Open, Resourceful, Divergent, Empathetic, Reflective, Appreciative, Mindful

WHEN AND WHERE CAN IT BE USED? This routine can be used to boost morale and build community; it shifts participants toward asset-oriented thinking. This is an excellent opportunity to scaffold toward more complex sculptural work. Trophies are great for community-building among adults too; use this routine during PD time to remind everyone of the unique qualities they bring to the team.

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