

# Scaffolding International Thank You Day (Primary) Donna Lee Fields, Ph.D.



*theory behind scaffold...*

Although both the origins and official date are disputed, we can use the International Thank You Day as an opportunity to help our students to begin the school day with hope for more positive forces in the world. From an educational standpoint, we create more powerful lessons by considering Vygotsky's assertion that:

*Our students are more likely to step outside their zone of proximal development (comfort zone) when their shared affective spaces are supported and nurtured*

*(Vygotsky, 1978)*

Especially since the pandemic, we know that unless we address factors that will strengthen the affective domain, our students will find moving forward in their learning emotionally taxing. We can support them by celebrating this expression.

The offering of a verbal 'thank you' is a delicate but powerful phrase.

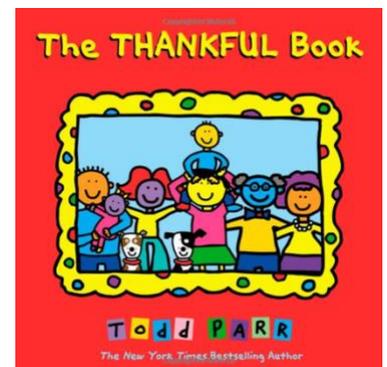
- It can be educational on a linguistic level: translated into whatever target language(s) you are studying.
- It can be studied through the eyes of multi-culturalism. In one culture, if said too often, it can annoy. In another culture, if unsaid, its absence can offend and create far-reaching misunderstandings.
- On a consumer level, in a world filled with the drive for wealth and fame, this day day is a wonderful opportunity to help our students to remember the non-materialist elements in their lives are extremely fulfilling.

There are many ways to say 'thank you' in every language. This scaffold invites you to swim past linguistics and dive into the more malleable interpretation of the expression.

*I am thankful for music because it makes me want to dance.  
I am thankful for my feet because they help me run and play.  
I am thankful for kisses because they make me feel loved.*

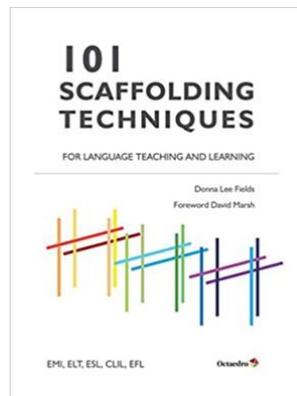
This scaffold supports a wonderful lesson plan found at [HeartMindOnline](http://HeartMindOnline). There are several options for the lesson and we're going to focus on the [Thankful Book](#) by Todd Parr, which gives students the opportunities to acknowledge non-materialistic elements in their own lives.

This is also a way of helping your students to master some elements of academic language, focusing on the suffix '-ful'.



*Step by step:*

1. Begin by giving the students linguistic support for the following activities. Write the following words on the board and ask students, in groups, to write sentences using them, using personal information to make the exercise more meaningful: *care, thought, pain, use, joy, beauty, wonder, fear, success, peace*. ([More words suffixed with -ful.](#))
2. Share with them that the suffix -ful means 'full of', so that putting it at the end of any of the words they wrote, adds that significance. Students now rewrite five of their sentences with the suffix -ful, making appropriate adjustments whenever necessary. (Ex.: I take care of my younger sister./I am very careful with my younger sister. My mother uses the library when she needs a quiet place to study./My mother finds the library useful when she needs a quiet place to study.)
3. Give each group a two pieces of paper, one with the word THANKFUL on it, and the other with the word GRATEFUL on it. All the members of the groups write things they are thankful and grateful for on the two pieces of paper. Discuss whether there are major differences between the two lists and their interpretation of the words. (See below for differences.)
4. Read the students the book, give each group images from Todd Parr's beautiful *The Thankful Book*, and/or show the [video of the book](#) (second option for [video](#)). Afterwards, students reconsider their lists on both sheets of paper, discuss whether they could include more non-material things and/or subtract some of them.
5. Finally, students individually write down 1-5 sentences of gratitude for things they are thankful or grateful for in their lives.



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