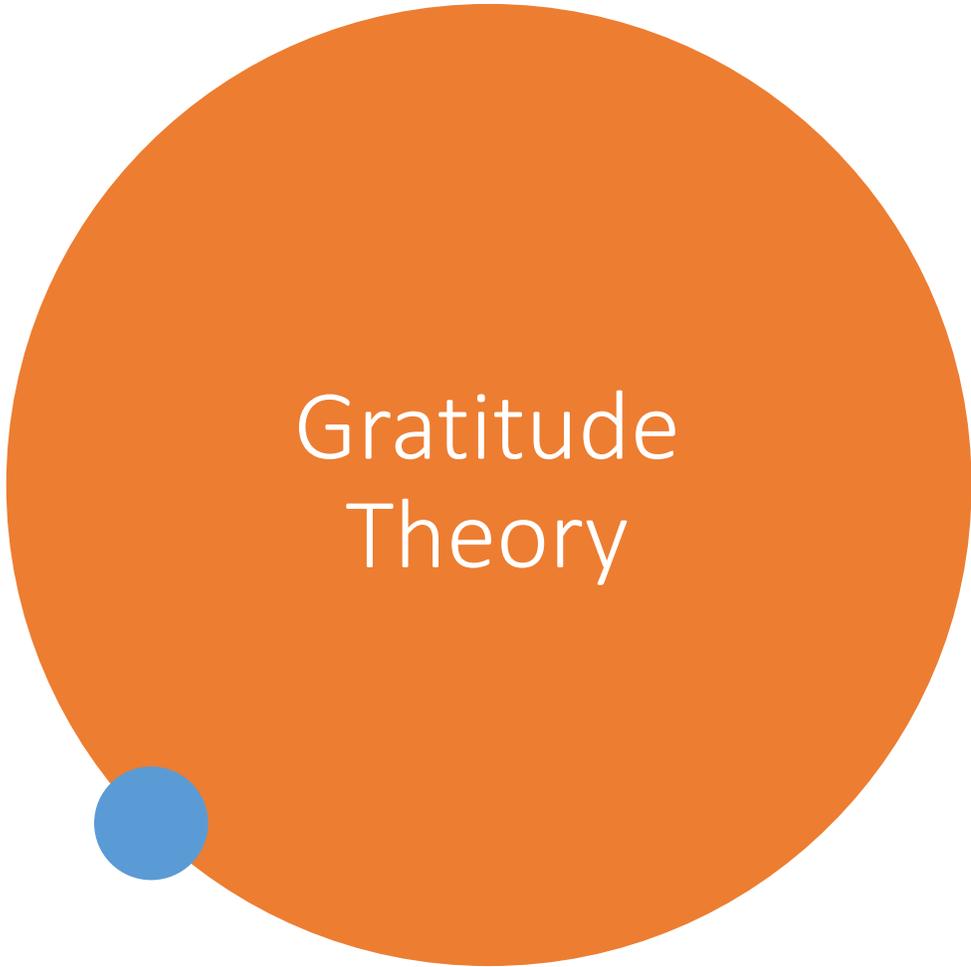




*"Reflect upon your present blessings,
of which every man has plenty; not on
your past misfortunes, of which all
men have some."*

Charles Dickens



Gratitude Theory

Counting your blessings is the simplest mood booster. Many experiments have shown this, including using CT scans to map brain activity.





Step 1:
Complete
these positive
sentence
prompts

I'm glad that I
have...

I'm grateful for...

I get to...

I'm lucky that I
can...

It's brilliant
when...

Step 2: Read the
extract from Duncan
MacMillan's *Every
Brilliant Thing*

Ice cream.

Water fights.

Staying up past your bedtime and being allowed
to watch TV.

The colour yellow.

Wearing a cape.

Peeing in the sea and nobody knows.

The even numbered Star Trek films.

Laughing so hard you shoot milk out of your
nose.

Making up after an argument.

Deciding you're not too old to climb trees.

Having desert as a main course.

Bubble wrap.

And notice that:

- some things are physical
- some things are actions
- some things are moments or ideas

Really good oranges.

Cycling downhill.

Aromatic duck pancakes with hoisin sauce.

The fact that sometimes there is a perfect song to match how you're feeling.

Dancing in private.

Dancing in public, fearlessly.

Not worrying how much money you're spending on holiday because all international currency looks like Monopoly money.

Christopher Walken's voice.

The prospect of dressing up as a Mexican wrestler.

Seeing someone make it onto the train just as the doors are closing, making eye-contact and sharing in this little victory.

Step 3: Freewrite a List of Brilliant things

- If you need help, you could use these prompts:
 - A food (pineapple)
 - Something satisfying (bubble wrap)
 - A smell (freshly baked cookies)
 - A TV programme/film (Harry Potter)
 - A moment (making the train because it's late)
 - An object (my running shoes)
 - A tool/technology (books/Satnav)
 - Music/a sound (cats purring)
- Include anything else that springs to mind now...

Step 4: Add Detail to your Brilliant Things

When something is very specific, it demonstrates the real individuality of the speaker, and makes it easier to connect and empathise. It also engages our imagination more fully.

E.G. *'pineapple juice'*

Okay, when?

'pineapple juice straight from the fridge on a hot, summer's day'

Or, who? where?

'Sharing a pineapple juice with an old friend in the garden'

You can also add detail with how? and why? This works well with tools/tech.

'Books for encoding dream worlds in patterns of ink that my brain can decode'

'Aeroplanes that allow me to sit in the sky travelling at over 500mph'

Step 5: Edit

Arrange the items in any order you want.

Try to finish on a line that changes something.

This may be because it is profound, or silly, or funny, or honest and vulnerable. Or because it isn't even a brilliant thing but a promise to yourself or a hope you have.



Step 6: Share your Brilliant Poem

We would really love it if you can share your work with us via our Twitter/Instagram page or through your teacher.

- Andy Craven-Griffiths Twitter Handle: @andy_c_g
- TSS Twitter Handle: @TitusSaltSchool
- TSS English Faculty Twitter Handle: @SaltTitus
- TSS Instagram Page: Titussaltschool