

The Gratitude Voyage



The story of two children
who lifted off to make the
world a more grateful place



A children's storybook and an exercise in gratitude



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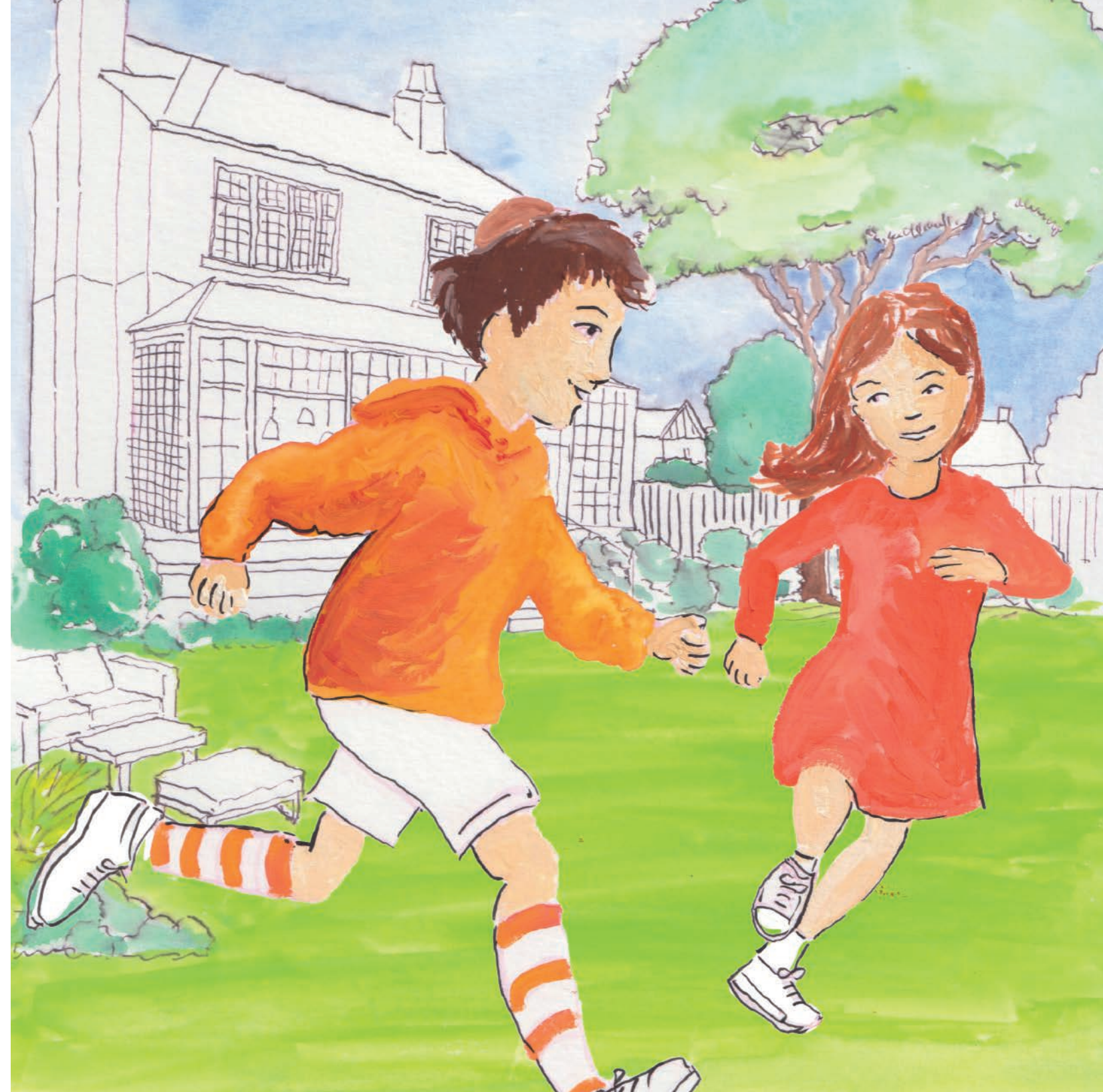
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Ella and Ben live in a beautiful house. They have a wonderful family and go to a great school. Ella is eight years old and Ben is ten years old and they love life. But one day on their walk to school they start noticing that something is not right...

Exercise

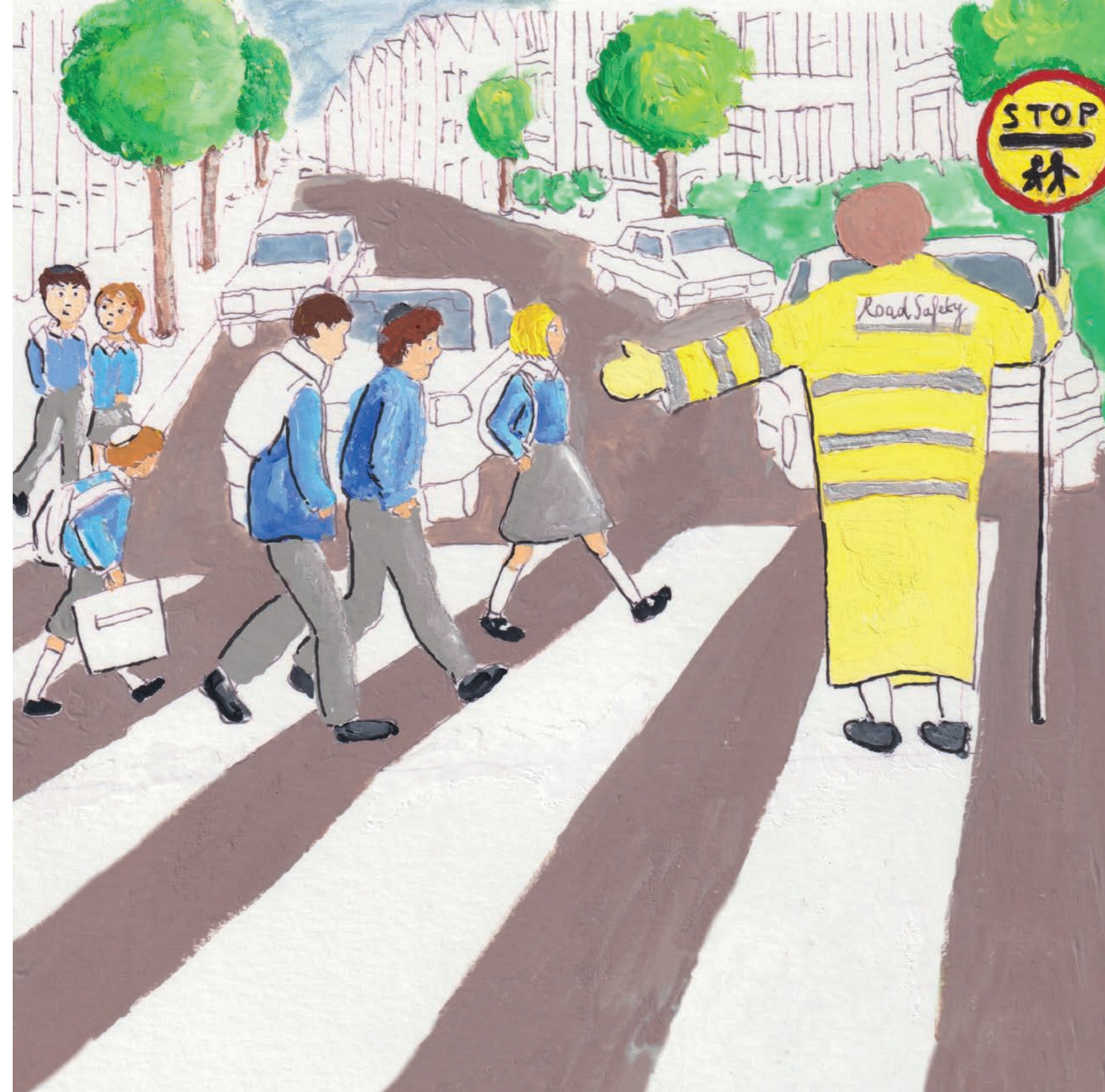
Name ten things that you are grateful for in your life.
How often do you pause to think about them?
How often do you speak about them?
Write a list with your friend and see how many things you have that are the same.



On their walk to school, they walk past the lollipop lady, helping the children cross the road. Every day, many children shuffle past on their way to school. Ella whispers to Ben, “Why doesn’t anyone say a kind thank you to her?”

Exercise

The lollipop lady mostly uses signs, not spoken words, to communicate. Can you create three ways of expressing thanks that do not involve saying any words?



As the children near the school gates, they walk past Angelo, the school security guard. The children are looking forward to another day at school, they chat excitedly as they walk through the school gates. Ben whispers to Ella, “Why is nobody thanking Angelo? He is here all day keeping us safe while we are at school.

Exercise

lots of children file past Angelo, very quickly! Angelo remembers their names. Say as many people’s names as you can in 15 seconds. Then wait 15 seconds see how many of those names your partner can repeat back. Repeat the game with the role switched and see how many names you can remember.

Now an exercise together. Count up to ten by each saying numbers, without two of you saying a number together.



Ella and Ben have a lovely day. They enjoy some superb lessons and play great games in lunchbreak. But after the children leave their classrooms to go home, Ella comes over to Ben and asks 'did anyone in your class thank the teachers today?' Ben shakes his head.

Exercise

Can you try and describe in 60 seconds as much as you can about a teacher's day and all the things they do to prepare for their lessons?

Can you think of five different creative ways of saying thank you to a teacher?



Ella and Ben realise that they have spotted a real issue. There's a lack of gratitude! People aren't expressing thank you enough to others. In the car on their rota on the way back from school they decide that they must do something about it.

Exercise

Can you try and name ten people you rely on each week? Now see if you can increase that list to twenty...

How many people does it take for your school to run smoothly?



As they return home, Ben spots a local advertiser leaflet on the kitchen side. He leafs through it and notices an amazing advert that reads: 'Gratitude Shuttle mission taking off in two weeks' time! Join a group of people going to space on a mission to develop a lasting gratitude programme. First meeting is this Sunday.' Ben tells Ella, they check with their parents, and they decide that this mission is for them!

Exercise

Someone pours a drink for you. Can you practise thanking them in five seconds. Now extend the thank you to last for ten seconds. Can you reach twenty seconds? What can you add in the sentence to make the thank you more meaningful?



On Sunday, Ben and Ella excitedly go along with their parents to the Gratitude Shuttle mission meeting. There, they meet the shuttle pilot, Josh. Josh explains that this mission is unique. They are all going to outer space on a mission to cultivate gratitude and when they return back to earth, they will teach their findings to everyone. Naturally, the first thing they do in the meeting is to go round thanking each other. Then they take a look at the space shuttle. The pilot explains where each part came from and how many people it took to assemble. The group then write letters thanking the various people who put together all those parts.

Exercise

Pick three objects that are around you. See how many parts of those objects you can list. Guess how many people were responsible for putting those parts together and where they came from. What skills were needed to do all of that? Can you create a different 'thank you' sentence for each of those people?



The day has finally arrived. Ben and Ella are ready to journey to space. As they take off, they see the world looking smaller and smaller. People look small, cars look small, and eventually the world looks small, as the shuttle travels further and further into space. Josh the pilot tells the passengers, “The reason some people don’t feel grateful in life is because they have ‘little’ mind-sets. They either feel small and insignificant inside or don’t want to look beyond themselves.’ He calls this ‘projection.’ He then hands out a booklet for the group to look at...

Exercise

Is pilot Josh right? Can you give examples when a person looks at the world differently because of how they feel inside? Can you make up a situation when two people may look at the same situation completely differently because of who they are or what they feel? For example, you are asked to help serve supper – for someone who likes helping this is great! For someone a bit more lazy, this is not!



What I heard
growing up



What I tell
myself today

Discuss

Summarise what the group learnt in space. Why do you think it is important to be grateful?

Rabbi Nosson Zvi Finkel: "When somebody has done something for you, there is no limit to how much you need to be grateful to them." (The giver has connected themselves to Hashem)

On the voyage the group learn more and more about gratitude – Josh is an excellent coach and teacher, as well as a pilot. They learn that gratitude is not just an act of saying thank you, it’s a way of looking at the world; noticing what people do and seeing the good. As they touch down to earth they are excited to put their lessons into practice and inspire others. Josh gives them one final word of warning before they land, “Working on something meaningful isn’t easy but don’t give up.” Of course, Josh ends with the words, “Thank you for flying with me.”

Exercise

Discuss: If a person says thank you without meaning it, is that a problem? What about someone who feels grateful but does not thank someone? Which is worse?

Act out someone saying thank you with meaning and then someone saying thank you without meaning. How can you tell the difference?



Ella and Ben have some superb ideas. As they return home that night they gobble down their supper, it tastes much better than space food. And they take fifteen minutes working out where each item of food on the table came from, how many people it took to get it to their home and thanked their parents for all the efforts making supper. Ella and Ben don't just say a quick 'thank you', they make sure to include lots of details in the thank you: "Thank you for choosing the food, cooking the supper and putting it on the table ready for us. It's just what we need and tastes great."

Exercise

Here are some quick thank yous. How can you change them to become more meaningful thank yous:

- Thanks for supper
- Thanks for having me
- Thanks for the party
- Thanks for the lesson



Ella and Ben are then invited to tell the entire school about their trip in the assembly. They come prepared and hand out cards to the pupils so they can write a proper thank you to each of their teachers.

Exercise

Can you design a thank you card?



That day Angelo and the lollipop lady receive many proper thank yous from the children. So much so, that the parents were waiting for longer than usual at pick up time that they caused a traffic jam.

Exercise

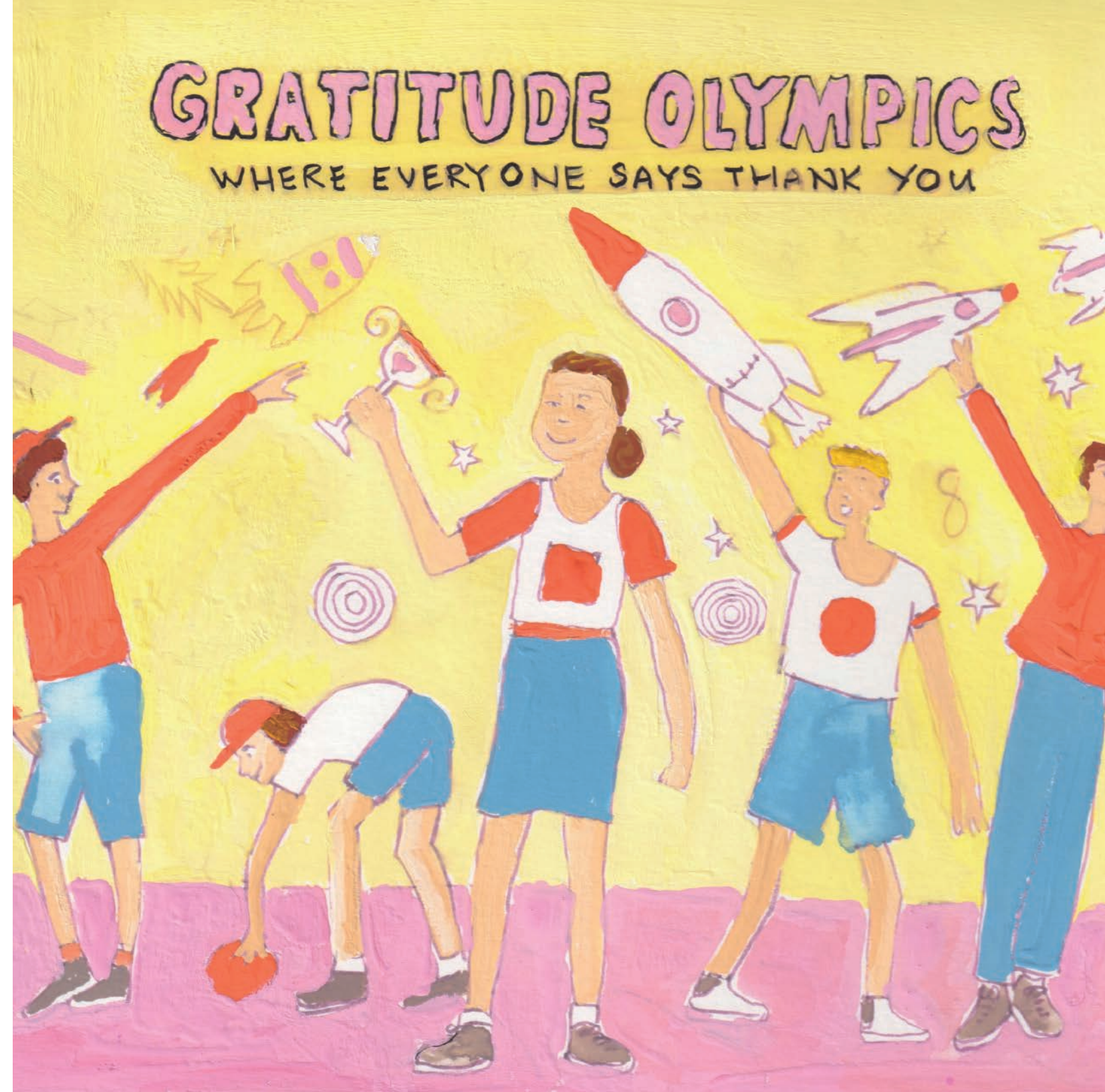
Can you go over to someone and thank them for something specific? The longer the sentence the better
Is it better to thank somebody face to face or ok to send a message? Why?



But Ella and Ben are not finished. Together with a group of teachers, they create a special Sports Day for the school. They decide to call it the Gratitude Olympics.

Exercise

What game would you put in the Gratitude Olympics?
Can we teach gratitude or is it something a person just 'picks up'?



There was the javelin competition, where people have to shout a thank you and see how far it goes. There was the relay race where each person runs, says a thank you to the next person and then the next person runs. And the thank-a-thon whereby pairs battle it out for who can say the most quick-fire genuine thank yous. Of course, all the medals at the Gratitude Olympics are individualised and contain the best things about each competitor.

Exercise

Play the Alphabet Gratitude game. Take it in turns to thank somebody in the game for something, each sentence must start with the next letter of the Alphabet.



Ben and Ella are finally taken to a Shul. They haven't been for a while but they are told that it's a great place to visit and that they may pick up some lessons in gratitude. They don't know much of the service but they have someone to help them. They are blown away - they see people saying blessings thanking Hashem for their bodies, for being alive, for all Hashem does for us. And it just so happens that the Rabbi chose to speak to the community about gratitude that day.

Exercise

Can you think of a prayer that expresses gratitude?



מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ
שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא הִי אֱלֹקֵינוּ
וְאֵלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם
עַד צוּר חַיֵּינוּ מִגֵּן
יִשְׁעֵנוּ אֵתָהּ הוּא לְדוֹר
וְדוֹר נוֹדָה לָךְ וְנִסְפָּר
תְּהַלְתֶּךָ עַל־חַיֵּינוּ
הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ וְעַל
נַשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת
לָךְ וְעַל נְסִיךְ שִׁבְכָל
יוֹם עַמָּנוּ וְעַל
נַפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ
שִׁבְכָל עֵת עֶרֶב וּבֹקֶר
וְצַהֲרַיִם הַטוֹב כִּי לֹא
כָּל רַחֲמֶיךָ וְהַמְּרַחֵם
כִּי לֹא תִּמּוּ חֲסִדֶיךָ
מֵעוֹלָם קוּיֵנוּ לָךְ

Modeh Ani

This tefillah is said immediately in the morning when waking up. It's a powerful reminder of our gratitude to Hashem for the opportunity of a new day.

Asher Yatzar

This blessing is said after one goes to the bathroom. It expresses gratitude to Hashem for the basic bodily functions.

Modim De'rabanan

This tefillah is said together in the repetition of the Amidah. In it, we thank Hashem for everything He gives us and asks Hashem to bring the Moshiach and Beis Hamikdash.

Modeh Ani

מוֹדֵה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם שֶׁחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמַתִּי בְּחַמְלָה, רַבָּה אֲמוּנָתְךָ
I give thanks to You living and everlasting King for You have restored my soul with mercy. Great is Your faithfulness.

Asher Yatzar

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה וּבָרָא בּוֹ נִקְבִּים וְנִקְבִּים
חֻלּוּלִים חֻלּוּלִים גְּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לְפָנֶיךָ כִּסֵּא כְבוֹדְךָ שֶׁאִם יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם אִי
אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקִים וְלַעֲמֹד לְפָנֶיךָ אֶפִּילוּ שְׁעָה אַחַת. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה רוֹפֵא כָּל־בָּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא
לַעֲשׂוֹת

Blessed are You, Adonoy our God, King of the Universe, Who formed man with wisdom and created within him openings and hollows. It is obvious and known in the presence of Your glorious throne that if one of them were ruptured, or if one of them were blocked, it would be impossible to exist and stand in Your Presence even for a short while. Blessed are You, Adonoy, Who heals all flesh and performs wonders.

Modim D'rabanan

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאתָה הוּא ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי כָּל בָּשָׂר יוֹצְרֵנוּ יוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ עַל שֶׁחַיֵּיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ בֶּן תַּחֲיֵינוּ וְתַקִּימָנוּ וְתַאֲסוּךְ
גְּלוּיֵינוּ לְחֻצְרוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ לְשִׁמּוֹר חֻקֶּיךָ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ וְלַעֲבֹדְךָ בְּלִבָּב שָׁלֵם עַל שֶׁאֲנַחְנוּ
מוֹדִים לָךְ. בְּרוּךְ אַל הַהוֹדָאוֹת

We are thankful to You, that You Adonoy are our God, and God of our fathers, God of all flesh, Our Creator, Creator of the Beginning. Blessings and thanksgivings to Your great and holy Name for keeping us alive, and sustaining us; so may You always keep us alive and sustain us, and gather our exiles to the Courtyards of Your Sanctuary to observe Your statutes, and to do Your will, and to serve You wholeheartedly, for we are thankful to You. Blessed is the Almighty to Whom all thanks

THE 30-DAY GRATITUDE CHART



Tick off each day that you express proper gratitude to three people

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6
DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10	DAY 11	DAY 12
DAY 13	DAY 14	DAY 15	DAY 16	DAY 17	DAY 18
DAY 19	DAY 20	DAY 21	DAY 22	DAY 23	DAY 24
DAY 25	DAY 26	DAY 27	DAY 28	DAY 29	DAY 30



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